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TRACTS:

I. A Diſcourſe againſt Revenge, (ſhewing the Exorbitant Paſſions in Man) from *Mat.* V. 21, 22.

II. Queſtions and Anſwers concerning the Two Religions; *Viz.* That of the Church of *England*, and the other of the Church of *Rome*. Intended for the Uſe and Benefit of the Younger Sort of People.

III. An Account of an Evening-Conference with a Jeſuite in the *Savoy*, *Jan.* 22.

IV. A Diſſwaſive from Popery, being a Letter to a Lady to preſerve her from Apoſtacy from the Communion of the Church of *England*.

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With a Preface by Mr. EDWARDS.

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THE PREFACE.

HAD I attempted my ſelf to have publiſhed any thing of this nature, which I now would only recommend; I ſhould then have had too great reaſon to have made an Excuſe, and indeed too juſt fears not to have obtain'd it: but ſince the Goodneſs, Authority, and Piety of the deceaſed Author are ſo very deſervedly valued by the World, I ſhall only concern my ſelf to let the Reader know that the following Tracts were his own writing, as I was deſired by the Bookſeller to do, and which piece of Service I could not well deny him, having compared the Sheets with ſome Manuſcripts that are in my hands, and with ſome occaſional Notes of his upon the Bible and Common Prayer-Book, which were lately ſold with his other Books; and indeed after their reſolution to publiſh them under his name,

it was but reaſon that the Reader ſhould be ſatisfied they were ſuch as they were repreſented.

And beſides the Authority that they may have, the Uſefulneſs of the firſt to reſtrain the Provocations and Revenges which this Age, as moral as it pretends to be, is ſo very full of, and of the other to diſpel the Careleſsneſs and Indifferency of the World towards any Worſhip at all, as full of Religion, or rather pieces of it as at preſent it is, may now add to its recommending.

For firſt, the Sinfulneſs of Revenge is ſo very great, and the pretended occaſions for it ſo very many, that the fatal forerunners of it, Anger and Malice, can't be too many ways, nor indeed by any, too ſeverely exploded: For though it's certain that the Courage of the preſent Age does not, any more than the Piety, come up to the Excellency of the Antient and Primitive time; yet that which is call'd Courage, (no better it may be than an ill tim'd and ill manag'd Reſentment,) will fly oftner in their Faces than their Conſcience ſtill, and raiſe the Concern for an affected Reputation, much above the care for their truly real and eternal Safety.

For a miſtaken Reſentment quickly forgets all Obligations of Nature, Country, Religion, and the ſame Fleſh and Blood too ſometimes, in the heighth of an encourag'd Paſſion, and unthinking fury; and the frequent repeating it ſerves only to harden the moſt recommending Tenderneſs of our Natures to another Perſon, and at length it may and does too ſometimes, make a Man forget that ſelf preſerving Care that is ſo unqueſtionably due to his own: Whereas the excuſing a Provocation may include the having a Power to revenge it, and beſides this, here is the Credit of the moſt difficult and recommending Maſtery gain'd, that of a Mans ſelf: and thus a Man is moſt likely to ſecure that Dominion which he would be aſſuming even over his Neighbour, whoſe Pride and Reſentment, when too provokingly urg'd, may prove as great as his. If Men would therefore comply with this agreeable reſtraint upon ſuch ungovernable Paſſions of their Nature, Revenge would be left to God, who was always pleas'd to reſerve it to himſelf who can beſt right our injur'd Innocence, with an hand whoſe Correction he can withdraw at his Pleaſure, (which command of our ſelves we to be ſure can't pretend to;) ſo ſhall we

be freed from the indecencies of Revenge that can never be amended, if the ſinfulneſs of it ſhould be repented of; unleſs a Man once provok'd were as willing to forget, as the Almighty, though never ſo incenſed, is to forgive upon the Submiſſion of a repenting Offender.

Thus much may ſerve to prepare the Reader to attend to the following Diſcourſe with a true Intention not to reſiſt ſuch influence, as by the Bleſſing of God it may have upon him, as that good Man doubtleſs pray'd it might when he writ it, and as I heartily deſire it may to all that read it.

In Relation to the other Tracts they may without doubt be very ſerviceable, not only to the Younger in years, but to thoſe too whoſe neglect of their time may in this reſpect, have ſhamefully levell'd them with thoſe, whoſe ſmaller Time and Judgment have not yet impower'd them to attend it; for I'm afraid it is too great a Truth, that many of our own Church apprehend as little of the Articles of that Faith they pretend to [illegible], and the Object of our Worſhip, as the generality of the other Church do of the Language of their's, and we are not only willing, but concern'd

too,

too, that they ſhould underſtand them both.

So that if the firſt Tract ſhould any ways contribute to reſtrain the troubleſome and uneaſie diſorders of Anger and Malice, and the diſmal procedure of double returning Revenge; and the other ſhould furniſh any unapprehending Perſon with a reaſon of the hope he has of his Salvation whenever it ſhould be demanded or any attempt made to remove him from it, which the diſtance of it don't ſeem to ſecure, more than the Diſſatisfactions Controverſies, and Careleſsneſſes may threaten.

And if the Account, that is here given of the Abſurdities, Impieties, and Vanities, that are in that Worſhip, ſhould convince any Perſon that he ought to decline it and retain his own, the Church would be ſerv'd: No Perſon that I know of injured, and the Reader, I hope, as well as my ſelf very well pleas'd in it.

London, May 25th. 1687.

W. EDWARDS.

A Discourse againſt Revenge, &c.

Mat. V. 21, 22.

Ye have heard, that it was ſaid by them of old time, Thou ſhalt not kill, and whoſoever ſhall kill, ſhall be in danger of the judgment:

But I ſay unto you, that whoſoever is angry with his Brother without a cauſe, ſhall be in danger of the judgment; and whoſoever ſhall ſay to his Brother Raca, *ſhall be in danger of the Council; but whoſoever ſhall ſay thou Fool, ſhall be in danger of Hell fire.*

FAlſe Teachers without doubt are very dangerous Men. The Murtherer kills the Body, theſe the Soul; and by the falſe Doctrines they ſow in Mens Heads and Minds, they not

only obſtruct their Salvation, but lead them into Perdition: Indeed if the Errors be light and trivial, the hurt that's done is not great; and while the erroneous Doctrine reaches no farther than Speculation, it can deſerve no very ſevere Cenſure; but when it ſpoiles and ſullies the Worſhip of God, or proves an impediment to the faithful diſcharge of our Duty to God and Man, Poiſon is not ſo prejudicial to the outward, as ſuch Opinions are to the inward Man, and the better part. And ſuch were the erroneous Doctrines of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees:* Blending the Traditions of their Fathers with the Law of God, and entertaining both, with an equal Faith and Veneration; they made an odd kind of Divinity, and quite perverted the deſign of Religion, which was to make Men univerſally good. This was particularly viſible in the notion they had of the ſixth Commandment, which they interpreted to the carnal advantage, and worldly Intereſt of their People, teaching them, that if they did but uſe that Care and Circumſpection as not to kill a Man, they did not only anſwer the deſign of the Lawgiver, but would prevent the Penalty annex'd, and their being taken notice

i. e. *Contradictions.*

notice of by the Magiſtrate, and puniſhed accordingly: but as for Wrath, and Malice, and reproachful Language, whereby Murder and ſuch bloody Practices are too often occaſion'd and promoted, theſe they told them were things not forbid in the primary Intention of the Law of God, and conſequently they need fear no Puniſhment. To which prepoſterous Expoſition our Saviour oppoſes his Divine Authority, proves the gloſs of their Elders upon the ſixth Commandment to be falſe; and ſhews, That what they thought did not deſerve ſo much as a temporal Judgment, God would puniſh with eternal Vengeance, if not forſaken, or repented of betimes: *Ye have heard, that it was ſaid by them of old time, Thou ſhalt not kill, and whoſoever ſhall kill, ſhall be*, &c.

This is a Text upon which Criticks and Learned Men have beſtow'd many excellent Obſervations, becauſe the words relate to ſome antient Cuſtomes of the *Jews*, in their Judicial Proceedings againſt Malefactors and others: But as I do not think it proper to entertain you with Curioſities, ſo if there be need of making uſe of any of thoſe Obſervations, I ſhall do it no farther, than they

ſerve to elucidate ſome of the obſcurer Paſſages of the Text, and make way for the practical Points I ſhall inſiſt upon for your Edification.

As to the Senſe of the Words, it's briefly this:

1. Whether we render the Expreſſion in the Original, ἐρρήθη τοῖς ἀρχαίοις, *It hath been ſaid by them of old time*, or *to them of old time*, as ſome Tranſlations read it, the difference is not very material: for as by thoſe of old time are meant either the antient Maſters of Tradition, who lived ſome hundred years before that time; or the Anceſtors of the *Jews*, to whom thoſe Maſters of Tradition pretended to deliver an oral Expoſition of the Law of *Moſes*; ſo if we read, *by them of old time*, the meaning is, You have heard that it hath been deliver'd, and ſaid by the antient Maſters of Tradition: And if we render it, *to them of old time*, the ſenſe is, You have heard it delivered to your Anceſtors and Forefathers, by thoſe antient Maſters of Tradition. I reſtrain, you ſee, this Paſſage to Tradition; for though the Senſe of it is to be found in the Law of *Moſes*, yet the Maxim, as it is related *by our Saviour* here, is not expreſſed there neither with that

that Connection: And therefore I conceive the antient Expoſitors of the Law contracted what *Moſes* had ſaid, into this *Motto*, *Whoſoever ſhall kill, ſhall be in danger of the judgment.*

2. What is ſaid here of Killing, is meant of killing a Man, and hath reſpect to the ſixth Commandment, *Thou ſhalt do no Murder.* By which Law, as the killing of Beaſts for Man's uſe could not be intended, nor deſtroying venemous and noxious Animals, nor executing of Malefactors by order of the Magiſtrate, nor depriving Men of their Lives in a juſt and lawful War, but an unjuſt depriving a Man of his Life; ſo there was a Puniſhment ſuitable annex'd to the breach of that Law; which Puniſhment was to be ordered and inflicted by the Magiſtrate; and ſo far as the Law of God given by *Moſes* went, all was right, and juſt, and reaſonable; but here the Maſters of Tradition had made a Diſtinction, that if a Man had hired another to kill his Neighbour, or had let looſe a wild Beaſt upon him, whereby he died, the Magiſtrate was not to inflict the Puniſhment of Death upon him, but he was to be left to the extraordinary Judgment of God; but if he killed him

in perſon, either by a Sword, or by a Stone, or by ſome other Weapon, then the Magiſtrate was to execute the Penalty appointed by the Law of *Moſes*, upon him; but this was not all, for they taught moreover, that though a Perſon who killed another was liable to capital Puniſhments, yet the Wrath, the Anger, and the Malice that prompted him to it, was a thing that deſerved no Puniſhment, and therefore this was not a thing to be feared; and here came in Tradition, which miſinterpreted the Law of *Moſes*, though it ſtands to reaſon, that he who forbids a Sin, at the ſame time doth forbid the occaſion of it, and all ſuch things as do naturally lead to the Commiſſion of it.

3. Our Saviour, to ſhew that Wrath, and Anger, and Malice, and reproachful Language, were liable to Puniſhment, as well as Murder, and that God would certainly laſh them, as well as the greater Enormities, takes notice of ſeveral degrees of unjuſt Wrath and Anger. The firſt is a ſudden Effervеſcence, or Boyling up of the Blood, or ſome violent Agitation and Commotion of the Paſſions upon a frivolous occaſion; and therefore adds εἰκῆ without ſufficient cauſe, which though it be not in ſome Copies,

yet

yet muſt neceſſarily be underſtood here; not denying but that Anger in ſome caſes may be lawful, but ſhewing withal, that if the occaſion of the Anger be ſlight and trivial, and the Anger even in a lawful cauſe be exceſſive, and going beyond its juſt bounds, it provokes God's heavy Diſpleaſure.

But then if this ſecret Anger within, or the firſt boyling over of the Blood, proceeds farther to contemptuous words, and that a Man in Wrath and Malice gives his Neighbour reproachful Language, deſpiſing and undervaluing him, by uſing Expreſſions and Names, which wound his Reputation, intimated by the word *Rakah*, *i. e.* vile and worthleſs Wretch; though I am apt to believe that an angry and threatning noiſe and poſture is chiefly meant by that word in this caſe, the Sin riſes higher, and becomes greater, and conſequently deſerves a ſeverer Judgment; but then, if this Anger mounts higher yet, and from an angry threatning Poſture and Noiſe, which betrays Wrath and Indignation, it proceeds to the calling our Neighbour *Fool*, *i. e.* wicked and reprobate Wretch, deſerving the eternal Anger both of God, and all good Men, which is the meaning

of the word Fool in the *Proverbs of Solomon*; as the Sin becomes more heinous by this Aggravation, ſo the Puniſhment of it in the other World will be greater yet.

4. What our Saviour ſaith here of a certain Gradation of Puniſhments due to the ſeveral Luſts, and degrees of Wrath and Anger, *Judgment*, *Council*, *Hell fire*, muſt be underſtood of Penalties in the next World, yet with alluſion to the degrees of Puniſhment among the *Jews* in this Life. Now among the *Jews*, there were three degrees of publick Infamy, according to the nature of the Puniſhment inflicted on Men for their Crimes, and the more publick the Puniſhment was, the greater was the Infamy. If an Offendor were brought before the Court of Three and twenty, which was an inferiour Court of Judicature called here, being guilty of the Judgment, and there condemn'd, he was infamous, and a great Diſgrace it was to him, but in a lower degree: If he were brought before the *Sanedrin*, or the Great Council of the Nation, conſiſting of LXX Elders, in the nature of our Parliament, and by them adjudged to Death, the Infamy and Diſgrace was greater: Yet if, laſtly,

ly, a Man were condemn'd to be burnt in the Valley of *Hinnon* or *Tophet*, where all the Trash and Filth of the City of *Jeruſalem*, the Garbage and dead Carcaſſes were burnt, and where antiently they offered their Children to *Moloch*, and where a perpetual Fire was kept to conſume all things that were offenſive and nauſeous, and which by the *Jews* themſelves was look'd upon as an Emblem of Hell fire, the Infamy was greateſt of all: According to theſe degrees of Infamy here on Earth, Chriſt ſhews there will be degrees of Puniſhment for the ſeveral degrees of unjuſt and unlawful Anger, in the other World; for moſt certainly this Threatning cannot be underſtood with reſpect to this Life, there being no ſuch thing inflicted upon Men, for Anger and reproachful Names, on this ſide the Grave; and whereas the *Jews* were generally afraid chiefly of Puniſhments in this Life, Chriſt thought fit to acquaint them and us, that we had far greater reaſon to be afraid of the Puniſhments in the next, as more dreadful and more grievous than any they could fear here on Earth. And this is the meaning of the Commination in the Text, *Whoſoever*, &c.

From

From the Words thus explained, arise these following Truths:

I. Antiquity is no warrant for erroneous Doctrines and Practices.

II. Murder is a Crime, which the Magistrate must by no means suffer to go unpunish'd.

III. Wrath and Anger without a just Cause, hath its degrees, and according to the degrees of the Sin, the Punishment in the next World will be proportionable.

1. Antiquity is no warrant for erroneous Doctrines and Practices.

The *Scribes* and *Pharisees* here pretended, that what they taught and practic'd concerning the sixth Commandment, was deliver'd to them by them of old time. But our Saviour shews, that this pretence could be of no use to them, but rather betray'd than cover'd their Nakedness.

Error pleads Antiquity as well as Truth; and though nothing be more antient than Truth, for it is from Eternity, and before ever Error appear'd in the World, Truth had the universal Monarchy, yet Error is as antient as the Fall. As soon as the Apostate Angels forsook their Habitation and Integrity together,

Error

Error began to ſhew it ſelf, which ſoon ſpread it ſelf through the habitable World; when Man, tempted by the Devil, conſented to his falſe Principles, and went aſtray from the center of his Happineſs. No doubt, Antiquity is venerable, but it muſt be in a good cauſe, and where Truth and *that* join together, the Argument is perſwaſive, and may be call'd invincible. But a thing is not therefore true becauſe it is antient, nor doth it command aſſent, becauſe of its uncommon Pedigree. Sin and Error loſe little of their Deformity by appealing to antient times, and an Error is ſo much the worſe, by how much it defends it ſelf by the Practice of former Ages.

Idolatry, and all the Vices in the World, may ſhelter themſelves under this roof; and there is no Villany ſo great, but Men may find a Preſident two or three thouſand years ago. The Prieſts of the Temple of *Diana* at *Epheſus*, called the Wicker-image of that Goddeſs Διοπετης, fallen down from *Jupiter*, meerly becauſe it was antient; and the Temple having been ſeven times ruin'd, and built up again, and this Image ſtill preſerved, was to them an Argument that this Worſhip muſt be lawful. Indeed, at this

this rate, a Man might even defend Sodomy with the Romiſh Arch-biſhop *Joannes Caſa*, becauſe it was practiſed in the Cities which God deſtroyed with Fire and Brimſtone, and the *Jews* would have had a good Plea for their Adoration of the Queen of Heaven, becauſe their Fathers had been uſed to it.

This very Argument makes the Allegations of the *Roman* Church from Antiquity ridiculous, and they might as well eſpouſe the Hereſies of *Ebian* and *Cerinthus*, becauſe they lived in and about the Age of the holy Apoſtles. When God hath given a Standard of Truth, that muſt be the Rule whereby Truth and Error muſt be concluded; and when that ſaith a thing is true, it is not its being revived, or taught but yeſterday, that can make it falſe; and whatever is contrary to that Form of ſound Words, muſt be erroneous and falſe, though it were as old as the Rebellion of *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*. The Worſhip of Images is not therefore lawful, becauſe *Irene* a ſuperſtitious Woman 900 years ago, got a company of illiterate and paſſionate Men together, who decreed it in a Council; nor is Sedition and Diſobedience to Magiſtrates therefore juſtifiable,

becauſe

becauſe *Gregory* II. Pope of *Rome*, in the eighth Century, ſhook off the Authority of *Leo Iſaurus*, his Emperor. And therefore let none of you plead for any Sin becauſe it is the faſhion, nor allow themſelves in actions offenſive to God's Holineſs, becauſe it hath been the Cuſtom of the Country to do ſo for many Ages. This will be but a poor defence in the laſt day to alledge, that you follow'd the ſinful Practices of your Anceſtors, or to ſay it was unmannerly to depart from that which was done before you for many Generations. To be ſure, Men were good before they were bad, and there was a Golden Age before that of Iron took place in the World; and therefore if Antiquity be a motive, nothing can challenge your Embraces more than Righteouſneſs, and dominion over your Appetite and Paſſions, for that was in the World before Mankind knew what is was to depart from the living God.

Murder is as antient as the time of *Cain*; yet no civiliz'd Nation under the cope of Heaven will allow of it, becauſe of its Antiquity: So far from it, that in all Countries it is order'd to be puniſh'd with the Death of the inſolent Creature: Which calls me to the II. Ob-

II. Obſervation, That Murder is a Crime which a Magiſtrate muſt by no means ſuffer to go unpuniſhed; for it hath been ſaid, *Thou ſhalt not kill, and whoſoever ſhall kill ſhall be in danger of the Judgment.* The Subſtance of this hath been ſaid by Almighty God, as well as by them of old time; and ſo far as God hath ſaid it, it is a Law unalterable. Murder is a truly crying Sin, for *the Voice of thy Brother's Blood crys unto me from the ground*, ſaith God, *Gen.* IV. 10. This is a Crime which Nature it ſelf trembles at; and yet we ſee there are Wretches and Monſters, who can ſteel and harden their Conſciences againſt the Horror of it: But God thunders againſt it from Heaven; and becauſe the Crime is ſo great, he hath made a Law, and given it to all Mankind, *That whoſo ſheds Mans Blood, by Man, i. e.* by the Magiſtrates, *ſhall his Blood be ſhed*, Gen. IX. 6. Nay, if a wild Beaſt tears a Man, who is going about his lawful Occaſions, in pieces, though an irrational Creature, God will ſtrike that Beaſt dead, becauſe it kill'd *Sanctius his Animal*, a nobler, and more ſacred Fabrick. So tender is God of the Life of Man, nor would he ſuffer his Tabernacle or Sanctuary to be

a

a refuge for ſuch a barbarous Wretch. The Horns of the Altar could not ſave the Offender, and from the very Temple he was to be dragg'd to the Gallows, or place of execution. The whole Country comes to be defiled by the horrid Crime, where it goes unpuniſh'd; and that Magiſtrate makes his Soul black with guilt, that connives at the inhumane Action; or out of reſpect to Greatneſs, or Rank, or Quality, pardons the intollerable Extravagance: Where this remains unpuniſh'd, when known, a Nation falls under the Curſe of God; and whatever Judgments befal them, an ounce of the unpuniſh'd Murder, as the *Jews* ſay of the Sin of the *Golden Calf*, may be ſaid to be an Ingredient of their Calamity.

We have a Diſtinction in our Law betwixt Mans Slaughter and Murder; A Diſtinction, which I wiſh did not too often cover that Bloody Crime, which ought to be avenged by publick Juſtice. The Word of God knows no ſuch Diſtinction; and tho' it provides for Chancemedly, and gives pardon to the Man that unawares, and without any intent to kill, proves the occaſion of another's Death; yet this is nothing to that Act, which Wrath and Anger, whether ſudden, or preme-

premeditate, doth produce to the Horro
of the Creation.

Neither doth the Law of the Goſpe
nor the Law of *Moſes* in this caſe befor
us, reverſe the Law of Nature; and Go
is ſo reſolute, that the Magiſtrate ſha
puniſh ſuch Offenders with Death, tha
where they do not, himſelf ſometime
takes the Sword in hand, and execute
the preſumptuous Deſtroyer of his I
mage: Nay, many times makes th
Wretch that did the Fact, and eſcape
the Magiſtrates Sword, his own Execu-
tioner: *Alphonſus Diazius*, a *Spaniard*
and a *Roman* Catholick, having kill'd
his own Natural Brother for turning Pro
teſtant, for which he receiv'd the Praiſe
and Applauſes of conſiderable Men in
the Church of *Rome*, haunted and hunt-
ed at laſt by the Furies of his own Con-
ſcience, deſperately hang'd himſelf at
Trent, *de callo Mulæ ſuæ*, ſaith the Hiſto-
rian, upon the Neck of his own Mule.

It's true, there are thoſe, who guilty
of ſuch Crimes, do yet eſcape the reveng-
ing Arm of God and Man here, but
the more terrible will be their Cup of
trembling hereafter; and God lets ſome,
like ſtall'd Oxen, grow fat on this ſide
the Grave, that with greater Terrour

they

they may fall a Sacrifice, when they die, to helliſh Furies. Nor can Duels and ſingle Combats upon an Affront receiv'd, and Challenging one another to fight, be excuſed from ſharing in the Heinouſneſs of this Guilt; for whatever fine Names, and plauſible Deſcriptions, the Law of Honour may have made of ſuch Actions; he that kills another in a Duel, though he gets a Pardon of his Prince, will be Arraign'd in the laſt day among the Murtherers, who ſhall have their Portion in the Lake which burns with Fire and Brimſtone.

I do not deny, but that in the dark times of Popery ſuch Combats have been allow'd of, and publick Prayers have been ſaid for Succeſs in ſuch Duels, but what Credit can a Cauſe receive from Ages, in which to underſtand Greek was a Crime, and Hebrew next to Hereſie. We need not wonder, that *Babylon* the Mother of Harlots ſhould permit ſuch things, whoſe Garments have been died Red with the Blood of the Saints of God, and which hath Tricks and Ways to Canonize Aſſaſſins, to conſecrate Murther, and to Chriſten Maſſacres, Services of Religon. To call upon you to take heed of having a hand

in Blood, were to discourage you from drowning or poisoning your selves, or running a Sword into your own Bowels for indeed this is no better, and whatever varnish may be put upon it, it is precipitating your selves headlong into the Gulf of Perdition. There is in this Sin, all that can aggravate a Deed; it is to raise a Hell in your Bosom, and the thing it self speaks so much abomination, that to name the Sin, is to give you a thousand Arguments against it. But then that ye may not be under any temptation to this Sin; let bitterness, and wrath, and anger be put away from you with all Malice, which leads me to the third Proposition.

III. That Wrath and Anger without a just cause have their Degrees, and according to them, the Punishment in the next Life will be proportionable. *For whosoever shall be angry with his Brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the Judgment; and whosoever shall say to his Brother* Raca, *shall be in danger of the Councel; but whosoever shall say thou Fool, shall be in danger of Hell-fire.*

That some Anger is lawful, is evident, from

from hence, becauſe Chriſt himſelf was angry, and very angry ſometimes, and ſo were the Apoſtles; and we are permitted to be ſo, but with this Caution, *be angry and ſin not*, i. e. ſo as not to Sin, *Eph.* IV. 26. So that all anger is not a mark of Damnation. But then when the Author and Captain of our Salvation, Chriſt Jeſus, and his Holy Apoſtles were angry, it was only againſt Sin, and out of a Zeal to Vertue, and when Men were obſtinate and would not be perſwaded to do their Duty; and a Senſe of God's Glory kindled the fire of their Paſſion; in which Caſe to be angry is a Perfection, and to be paſſionate, a Chriſtian accompliſhment; provided ſtill that the bounds of that Anger be obſerved, and it's heat do not turn into Wild-fire; that it be not attended with unſeemly Expreſſions, nor accompanied with furious Geſtures and Actions. I do not deny but a Man may be angry with his Servant, a Father with his Children, and a Maſter with his Schollars, and proceed even to Correction; but then it muſt be, becauſe they neglect their Duty, or will not hearken to wholſome Admonitions,

and when gentler Addreſſes will do n
good, and the Anger muſt be more up
on the account of their Sin, than out o
any Deſire to revenge, and it muſt b
an Anger mingled with Pitty and Com
paſſion, and which ends in Prayer for th
Offenders, and it muſt be free from Fur
and reviling Language: And being kep
within theſe bounds, I find no fau
with this Anger. But this is not th
Anger my Text ſpeaks of, and againſt
which Chriſt levells his Comminatio
here, for that's anger without ſufficien
cauſe, even Anger, becauſe our worldl
Intereſt is not promoted, as we expected
or becauſe our Honour and Reputation i
touch'd, or becauſe ſomething, whic
gratifies our Luſts,is with-held from us
or becauſe our vain Deſires are no
cocker'd and flatter'd, or becauſe ſuch
Perſon hath not given us the Title an
Reſpect we look'd for, or becauſe w
cannot digeſt a Reproof, or becauſe w
are croſs'd in our Deſigns,or becauſe ſuc
a Man is not of our Opinion,or becauſe h
will not conform to our Humour. The
are the things which commonly provok
to Paſſion, and this Anger, the farther
goes,the worſe it grows,if from though
an

and ſecret grudges; it proceeds to contumelious, reproachful, and reviling Language, to calling the party ill Names, Fool and Rogue, and Villain, and Raſcal and Knave, and Cheat, and Hypocrite, and ſuch other Titles, as modeſty will not ſuffer us to name, it becomes greater; and if from Words and Expreſſions it goes farther yet, even to Actions of Revenge, and ſettles in Hatred, in Rancour, and inveterate Malice; it then ſhuts out the righteouſneſs of God, and lets in the Devil, and invites evil Spirits to come and Lodge in that houſe, and the laſt Eſtate of that Man grows worſe than the firſt.

And is not this the Caſe of abundance of you? Do not you ſee ſomething in this Glaſs that's very like you, and reſembles your Temper? And do but conſider, what weakneſs, what impotency of Reaſon, and Spirit you betray and diſcover by ſuch doings? Is not this an inlet to *confuſion and every evil work*, *Jam.* III. 16. Is this the Chriſtian Spirit? is this to know, what manner of Spirit you are of? Is this treading in your Maſters ſteps? Is this following his Example, *Who when he was*

reviled, reviled not again? Dare you ap
pear before the Son of Man in the laſt
day with ſuch a Diſpoſition of Soul
never yet ſeriouſly repented of? Is thi
to reſiſt the Devil? Is this to purifi
your Hearts? Have you ſo learne
Chriſt? Is this to be Children in Ma
lice, as you are bound to be by your Pro
feſſion? Is this to crucifie the Fleſh with
the Affections and Luſts, upon the leaſ
Provocation, preſently to be in a huff
preſently to let your Tongues looſe, and
to break forth againſt your Brethren in
Language fitter for *Turks* and *Indians*
than for *Chriſtians*? Is this to be meek a
Doves? Is this to Love one another with
a pure Heart fervently? Is Hell-fire no
thing but painted Flames? Hath our
great Maſter threatned it, and do we
make light of it? Can you ſeriouſly
reflect upon this Commination, and
be unconcerned? And is not this
threatning a Call to Repentance?
What a mercy is it, that God will ac
cept of a ſincere Repentance after ſuch
Provocations? But how can you repent
of your Paſſion, if you do not mortifie
it? How can you mortifie it, if you do
not conquer it? How can you conquer it

if you do not ſtrive? How can you ſtrive, if ye do not uſe the proper means and weapons God hath appointed in the Goſpel? How can you profeſs ſorrow for this Sin, when you fall willfully into the ſame Sin again? Do you call a mock Repentance, godly Sorrow! Or do you take that to be Repentance which is ſeparated from actual Reformation?

Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory tells us of two Biſhops that fell out, and proceeded even to reviling Language, and ſo parted; toward night one of them ſent the other word, *Brother, the Sun is going down*; with that, the angry Man remembred St. *Pauls* ſaying, *Let not the ſun go down upon your wrath*, and made haſte, and found out his offended Brother, and fell on his Neck and kiſſed him. The *Pythagoreans*, though Heathens, did the like, for if they had quarrell'd one with another in the day time, they would not go angry to Bed, but ſhak'd hands before Sun-ſet. Did Heathens do ſo, and ſhall Chriſtians be ſtrangers to this Practice? Flatter not your ſelves with this, that you kill no body in your Anger, ſo did the *Phariſees*, but muſt ye therefore act againſt the Law of Rea-

ſon and Religion, becauſe you do not run ſtark Mad? Do you own your ſelves Diſciples of the Lord Jeſus, and will not you believe what he ſaith in the Text? Hath he peremptorily forbid you all Bitterneſs and Wrath, *and ſpeaking evil one of another*, and will not you obey him? Doth he aſſure you, that it renders you obnoxious to Hell-fire; and do not you think, what if I ſhould fall into that Fire in my anger? Are you ſure you ſhall not? Hath God told you, that he will not ſtrike you dead in a Fit? Do not you expreſs all that's terrible by Hell-fire? and is not the poſſibility of falling into it, a ſufficient Defence againſt this inordinate Paſſion? Do you hope for Chriſt's Rewards, and will you deprive your ſelves of them by your willful diſobedience?

Did you go about mortifying that bitterneſs of Spirit, like Men in good earneſt; how could ye fail of Succeſs? Did ye pray fervently againſt it, watch againſt it, chide your ſelves frequently for it, ſhun the occaſions of it, check it when ye find it riſing, ſet before you the danger and believe it. Call to mind the meekneſs of your great Maſter, and the

won-

wonderful Patience of the Holy Apoſtles in their private Injuries, how could your undertakings miſcarry? Doth anger according to *Solomon*'s Verdict, reſt in the boſom of Fools, and do you take your ſelves to be wiſe Men for it? O be better adviſed, and if the Mercy, the Patience, the Clemency, the Compaſſion of God toward you, cannot melt down your angry, your wrathful Conſtitution; ſtand in awe however of your Ruin, of your everlaſting Ruin, and remember who it is that ſaid and proteſted, and will Act according to his Proteſtation, *Whoſoever ſhall be angry with his Brother without a Cauſe*, &c.

QUESTIONS
AND
ANSWERS
CONCERNING
The Two Religions,
VIZ.
That of the CHURCH of *ENGLAND*,
And the other of the CHURCH of *ROME.*

Intended for the Use and Benefit of the Younger Sort of People.

LONDON;
Printed in the Year 1697.

Queſtions *and* Anſwers concerning the Two Religions, *&c.*

Queſt. 1. **HOW doth the Church of England differ from the Church of Rome?**

Anſw. The Church of *England* keeps cloſe to the Antient Creeds, commonly call'd the *Apoſtles*, the *Nicene*, and that of *Athanaſius*: The Church of *Rome* hath added new Articles of Faith to theſe Antient Creeds, which we reject.

Queſt. 2. **When did the Church of Rome add theſe new Articles?**

Anſw. In the Council of *Trent*, not much above a hundred years ago, for it began in the year 1545, and ended in the year 1563.

In the New Confeſſion of Faith compiled and publiſhed by Pope Pius IV. a little above a hundred years ago.

Queſt. 3. **What's the reaſon the Church of England doth not receive thoſe new Articles of Faith?**

Anſw. 1. Becauſe they are not to be found in the Word of God.

2. They

2. They are many of them contrary to the Word of God.

3. No Church in the World hath Power to make New Articles of Faith.

Quest. 4. **What are the New Articles of Faith the Church of Rome hath added to the Antient Creeds?**

Answ. They are these following:

I. "That the Traditions of the Church "are to be received with the same "Faith and Veneration, we owe to "the Holy Scriptures.

II. "That there are seven Sacraments; "*Baptism*, *Confirmation*, the *Eucha-* "*rist*, *Pennance*, *Extreme Unction*, "*Orders*, and *Marriage*; and that "these confer Grace.

III. "That among the Ceremonies u- "sed in the *Roman* Church, the "Publick Service in *Latin*, or an "unknown Tongue, is a commen- "dable Service.

IV. "That in the Mass there is offered "to God, a true Propitiatory Sacri- "fice for the Living and the Dead.

V. "That in the Sacrament of the Eu- "charist the Bread and Wine are "changed into the very Substance "of Christ's Body and Blood.

VI.

VI. " That Laymen need not receive " the Sacrament of the Eucharist in " both kinds, and that it's sufficient " for them to communicate in one. *Under one kind only.*

VII. " That there is a Purgatory, or a " Place after Death, where good " Mens Souls are tormented for " smaller Sins; and relieved by the " Alms and Prayers of the Living.

VIII. " That the Saints departed this " Life, may and must be pray'd to " and invoked, and that their Re- " liques must be worshipp'd.

IX. " That the Images of Jesus Christ, " and of the Virgin *Mary*, and of o- " ther Saints, may and ought to be " worshipp'd.

X. " That Indulgences, or Dispensati- " ons of the redundant Merits of " Saints, are very useful things.

XI. " That Auricular Confession, or " Confession of all our mortal Sins, " with the Circumstances of them " to a Priest, is necessary to Salva- " tion.

XII. " That the Church of *Rome* is " the Catholick Church, and Mi- " stress of all other Churches.

Quest. 5. **Why must not Traditions be received with the same Faith, that is due to the written Word of God?**

Answ. 1. Because the written Word of God is perfect, containing all things necessary to Salvation: And that does not direct us to Traditions, but rather warns us against them.

2. Because the Traditions of the Church of *Rome*, many of them are false, and many uncertain.

3. Their Traditions are not Traditions which have been receiv'd in all Ages, by all Churches, and in all Places; for such only are the true Apostolical Traditions.

4. That they are not absolutely necessary, their own Practice shews, in that they reject Authentick Traditions, and particularly that of Communicating Infants.

And here you may note, The Reason why they fly to Tradition is, because they cannot prove their New Doctrines by the Word of God.

Quest. 6. **Why do not you believe seven Sacraments?**

Answ. 1. The Holy Ghost in Scripture hath no where declared such a number.

2. This

2. This preciſe number of Seven Sacraments was not heard of in the Chriſtian Church, till twelve hundred years after Chriſt.

3. There are but Two Sacraments mention'd in the New Teſtament; I mean ſuch as are true and proper Sacraments, *viz.* Baptiſm, and the Supper of the Lord.

4. The Council of *Trent* was the firſt that made this Number an Article of Faith.

Queſt 7. **Why do not you allow of Publick Service in Latin, or in a Tongue not underſtood by the People?**

Anſw. 1. Becauſe St. *Paul* writes a whole Chapter againſt it; 1 *Cor.* 14.

2. Becauſe the Publick Service ought to be for the Edification of the People; and Service in an unknown Tongue cannot edifie.

3. The Practice of the Primitive Church is againſt it.

4. Some of the wiſer Men in the Church of *Rome* themſelves, find fault with this Publick Service in an unknown Tongue.

5. This Practice in the Church of

Rome, is only to ſerve ſome Worldly Ends.

Queſt. 8. **Why do not you admit of the Sacrifice of the Maſs?**

Anſw. 1. Becauſe the Church of *Rome* tells us, that they do ſacrifice Chriſt every day in the Maſs, which is directly contrary to the 9th Chapter of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, *Heb.* 9. 25, 26, 27, 28.

2. Becauſe there can be no true and proper Sacrifice without Death; and it ſounds dreadful to a Chriſtian Ear, that the Prieſt kills Chriſt every day, or which is all one, puts his God to Death.

3. It deſtroys the end of a Sacrifice, which is to teſtifie our Subjection to God; but in this Sacrifice of the Maſs, the Offerer, who is the Prieſt, muſt be greater than the Offering.

4. The Lord's Supper is only a Commemoration, or Repreſentation of Chriſt's Sacrifice, and a Sacrifice of Thankſgiving, but no proper or true Propitiatory Sacrifice.

Queſt. 9. **Why do not you believe a Tranſubſtantiation in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.**

Anſw.

Anſw. 1. It is againſt all Senſe, for we may ſee, and feel, and hear, and taſte, and ſmell, that the Bread and Wine after Conſecration, are Bread and Wine ſtill.

2. It is againſt Reaſon, that Chriſt's Body and Blood ſhould be in a thouſand places at once.

3. It is againſt Scripture, for Chriſt proteſts, that *his fleſh profits nothing*; *Joh.* 6. 63.

4. It is againſt the Nature of a Sacrament, which is an outward viſible Sign of ſomething Spiritual; and Tranſubſtantiation deſtroys the Sign.

5. Chriſt himſelf explains what he means by ſaying, *This is my Body*, when he adds, *Do this in remembrance of me*; which *remembrance* ſuppoſes the abſence of his Natural Body.

6. It is againſt that Article of our Faith, which ſaith, *That Chriſt is to continue in Heaven till the Reſtitution of all things*: And there is no neceſſity we ſhould take the words literally any more than the words in *Jo.* 10. 7. *I am the door, &c.*

7. *This is my Body*, is a Phraſe or Form of Speech exactly like that of the Lamb in the Paſſover; *This Lamb is the Paſſeover, i. e.* the Memorial of it.

8. Theſe words, *This is my Body*, do not naturally infer a ſubſtantial change, by the Confeſſion of ſome Papiſts themſelves.

9. They themſelves cannot be ſure of this Change, becauſe they ſay it depends upon the Intention of the Prieſt.

10. The Abſurdities that flow from the Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation, are innumerable; for then Chriſt muſt have eaten himſelf, the Diſciples muſt have eaten up their Maſter; Chriſt's Body may be lockt up in a Box for half a year together and longer, *&c.* Whereas the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, that the Bread repreſents Chriſt's Body, and upon that account is his Body, hath no Inconveniency in it.

11. Tranſubſtantiation is againſt the Doctrine of the Primitive Church, which calls the Bread the Figure of Chriſt's Body.

Queſt. 10. **Why do not you think it lawful for Laymen to receive the Communion in one kind only?**

Anſw. 1. Becauſe Chriſt ſaith expreſly to the Diſciples, *Drink ye all of this.*

2. The Practice of the univerſal Church of Chriſt for a thouſand years together, is againſt it. 3. The

3. The Council of *Conſtance* in the year 1416. was the firſt that durſt venture upon this Sacriledge, and deprive the Laity of the Cup in the Sacrament, contrary to Chriſt's Inſtitution, and the Practice of the Primitive Church.

4. The Prieſts in the Church of *Rome* dare not conſecrate without the Cup, nor do they think the Sacrament perfect without it; and if they do not think it perfect without the Cup when the Prieſt takes it, why ſhould they cheat the Laity.

Queſt. 11. **Why do not you believe a Purgatory?**

Anſw. 1. Becauſe the Scripture makes no mention of it.

2. The Scripture mentions only two places Men go to after Death, which are Heaven and Hell.

3. In good Men there is no Condemnation; *Rom.* 8. 1.

4. Good Men are ſaid to reſt from their Labours, from the moment of their Death; *Rev.* 14. 13.

5. This Doctrine is injurious to the Merits of Chriſt, as if they did not procure for us a full Remiſſion of our Sins before we die.

6. The Doctrine of Purgatory was no Article of Faith before the Council of *Trent*.

7. It was brought in by Monkiſh Stories, and for the profit of the Clergy.

8. The Primitive Church did not believe it; for the Fire the Fathers Talk of, is that of the Day of Judgment.

9. The Greek Church at this day, doth not believe it.

10. Though the Primitive Church did pray for the Dead, yet it was not for Souls that were in Torment, but for Souls in a ſtate of Felicity and Bliſs, that God would ſhew them mercy in the laſt day, and haſten their happy Reſurrection, and give them a bleſſed Sentence.

Queſt. 12. **Why do not you pray to the Virgin** Mary, **and the Saints departed, and why do not you worſhip their Relicks?**

Anſw. I Worſhip not Saints departed, nor pray to them.

1. Becauſe the word of God is directly againſt it, for it ſaith, *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve*, Matth. 4. 10.

2. It is abſurd, and unnatural to worſhip

ſhip Perſons, who are not preſent to receive our Worſhip, or to ſpeak to Beings, who we neither are, nor can be ſure that they hear us.

3. Prayer is a ſpiritual Sacrifice; and therefore muſt be only offer'd to God. External Sacrifice offer'd to Creatures, by the Confeſſion of the *Papiſts* themſelves would be Idolatry; and therefore much more a ſpiritual Sacrifice, as it is of greater conſequence than the other.

4. There is no Example among the *Chriſtians* for the firſt Three hundred years after Chriſt, of their Invocation of Saints departed.

5. We are expreſly Commanded to go directly to God in Prayer, *through our only Mediator Jeſus Chriſt*, Pſal. 50. 15. 1 Tim. 2. 5.

6. It's a great diſhonour to God, to beg that of Saints, which God only can give; ſuch is their Prayer in the Office of the Bleſſed Virgin: Mary, *Mother of mercy, protect us from the Enemy, and receive us in the hour of Death.*

7. If they did only pray to Saints to pray for them, it be would an injury to Chriſt's Mediation, for this is to make a hundred Mediators or more.

8. Their praying to Saints in Heaven, to pray for them, is not the ſame with our deſiring our Neighbours here on Earth to pray for us, for we know our Neighbours hear us, nor is that any more, than a friendly Requeſt; here are no formal Prayers offer'd to our Neighbours, and beſides for this we have a Command, but none for the other.

I do not worſhip the Relicks of Saints departed.

1. Becauſe, if I am not to give religious Honour to Saints, it's certain I muſt give none to their Relicks.

2. There is no Command, no Example in Scripture for this Practice.

3. This Trade with Relicks was not known, or heard of in the Church, till very near Four hundred years after Chriſt.

4. Devout men carried St. *Stephen* to his Burial, but there was no ſtir made with his Relicks.

5. Some of the Wiſer ſort in the Church of *Rome* confeſs themſelves, that there are great Cheats in Relicks; and the Bones of Thieves and Murtherers are ſometimes ador'd for Relicks of Saints.

6. By this worſhipping of Relicks great

great Corruption and Superſtition came into the Church.

7. The miracles pretended to be wrought, are very often nothing but Deluſions of the Devil.

8. By this Veneration of Relicks; Mens minds are diverted, and turned away from that rational, and ſpiritual Worſhip the Goſpel requires.

9. It's evident, that in the Church of *Rome* they put great Truſt and Confidence in Relicks, and abuſe them into Superſtition.

Queſt. 13. **Why may not the Images of God, of Chriſt, of the Virgin Mary, and of other Saints be worſhipped?**

Anſw. 1. Becauſe it is peremptorily forbid in the Second Commandment. *Thou ſhalt not make to thy ſelf*, &c.

2. God declares his anger againſt thoſe, that pretend to make any ſimilitude of him, *Deut.* 4.15, 16. *Eſ.* 40.18.

3. The Primitive Chriſtians would not ſuffer Images ſo much, as to be painted on the Walls of Churches.

4. Several Councils of old have condemn'd this Worſhip.

5. The *Carpocratians* were counted Hereticks

Hereticks in the Primitive Church for worſhiping the Images of Chriſt, and of St. *Paul*, in private.

6. God doth not only forbid placing a Divine Vertue in ſuch Images, but falling down before them in a Religious way; and whatever Mens intentions are, he interprets their falling down before them, as worſhipping the Image it ſelf, *Jerem.* 2. 26, 27. *Eſa.* 44. 17.

7. The Heathens excuſed themſelves with the ſame Plea, that the Church of *Rome* doth now, that they did not Worſhip the Image, but the Perſon repreſented by the Image; yet the Chriſtians look'd upon them as Idolaters.

8. So incens'd were the Primitive Chriſtians againſt the worſhip of Images; that *Epiphanius* tore a Veil in the Church, on which an Image of Chriſt, or of ſome Saint was painted.

9. Though the ſecond Council of *Nice* eſtabliſhed this Image-worſhip, yet the Council of *Francford*, that follow'd ſoon after condemn'd thoſe Fathers for their Superſtition, and Deflecting from the Rule of Chriſtianity.

Queſt. 14. **Why do you reject the uſe of Indulgences, and Diſpenſations**

penſations of the treaſure of the Church?

Anſ. 1. Becauſe they are built upon falſe Foundations, ſuch as Purgatory, the Supererogations of Saints, or doing more than was neceſſary, God's imperfect forgiving of Sins, and Satisfactions to be made to the Juſtice of God.

2. Theſe Indulgences are things not ſo much as heard of in the Primitive Church, for they are wholly engroſſed by the Pope, who ſends his Servants abroad to ſell them to any Stranger for Money.

3. Though in the Primitive Church the reſpective Biſhops in their Dioceſſes, relax'd the time of a true Penitents Severities he was to undergo; yet they neither intended to free the Penitents from the Pains of Purgatory, nor pretended to apply to them the ſuperfluous merits of Saints, as is done in theſe popiſh Indulgences.

4. They have no Foundation in Scripture by the Confeſſion of their Learned men, and they came very late into the Church, and its plain they are uſed as a means to get Money.

5. By

5. By theſe Indulgences men are hindred from a true Repentance; for they pretend to releaſe Men by them, both from Sin and Puniſhment, at leaſt the People are ſuffer'd to think ſo, if they do but ſay ſo many Prayers, or go in Pilgrimage to ſuch a place, or faſt ſo many days from ſome kinds of Meats, or give a large ſum of Money for the building of a Church, or go to War againſt Infidels, *&c.*

Queſt. 15. **Why do not you think Auricular Confeſſion to a Prieſt neceſſary to Salvation?**

Here you muſt Note, That we are not againſt Confeſſion in the Church of *England*, nay our Church preſſes it both publick and private to God; and Confeſſion to a pious and able Miniſter, if the Conſcience be burden'd, and upon a Death-bed; but we dare not ſay as they do in the Church of *Rome*, that a Man cannot be pardon'd or ſaved, except he Confeſſes to a Prieſt.

1. We allow not of it in the ſenſe of the Church of *Rome*. Becauſe there is nothing in the Word of God, that makes the neglect of it Damnable.

2. The Confeſſion uſed in the Primitive

tive Church, was made by ſcandalous Sinners publickly in the Congregation; and therefore is not the ſame with that practis'd in the Church of *Rome*, which commands the Confeſſing all mortal Sins with their Circumſtances into the ear of a Prieſt at ſet times, and before the receiving of the Sacrament.

3. Since it is not of Divine, but Eccleſiaſtical Inſtitution, it cannot be abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation.

4. It cannot be a Sacrament as they make it in the Chuch of *Rome*, becauſe it wants Chriſt's Inſtitution.

5. This Confeſſion to a Prieſt, as it is managed in the Church of *Rome*, is no Check, but rather an Encouragement to Sin.

Queſt. 16. **Why do not you believe that the Church of** Rome, **is the only Catholick Church, and the Miſtriſs of all other Churches?**

Anſw. I can never believe, that the Church of *Rome*, is the only Catholick Church.

1. Becauſe there are vaſt multitudes of Chriſtians in the World, which are not in actual Communion with the Church of *Rome*, and yet are Members of

of the Catholick, or which is the ſame of Chriſt's univerſal Church diſperſed all the World over.

2. To ſay, That the Church of *Rome* is the Catholick Church, is to ſay, That a part is the whole, or that a Houſe is a whole City, or that one Member is the whole Body.

3. The Primitive Chriſtians did not take the Church of *Rome* for the only Catholick Church.

4. God hath no where in Scripture declared ſo much.

5. To ſay the Church of *Rome* is the only Catholick Church, is a moſt uncharitable Doctrine, and to Damn the greater part of the Chriſtian World.

6. All Churches that do hold the ancient Faith contain'd in the three Creeds are Members of the Catholick Church.

7. The Church of *Rome* is ſo far from being the only Catholick Church; that her ſtrange Doctrines make her at the beſt but a very unſound Member of the Catholick Church.

I do not believe, That the Church of Rome *is the Miſtreſs of all other Churches in the World.*

1. Becauſe there is no ſuch Authority

ty given her in the word of God.

2. The Superiority ſhe Claims is nothing but Uſurpation.

3. The *Aſian*, and *African* Churches heretofore rejected her Authority.

4. The *Eaſtern* Churches at this day deſpiſe her Pride and pretended Authority.

5. The Church of *England* was a free Church from the beginning; and therefore juſtly maintains her Freedom, and how ſhould that Church be Miſtreſs of all other Churches, that takes Liberty to change Chriſt's Inſtitutions and Commands, and contradicts the Word of God.

Queſt. 17. **Doth the Church of** Rome **differ from the Church of** England **in any other Points?**

Anſw. Yes, for ſhe holds.

1. That Extreme Unction is a Sacrament neceſſary to Salvation.

2. That it is unlawful for Prieſts to Marry.

3. That ſhe is infallible.

4. That the Scripture is not to be read in a vulgar Language by the common People.

5. That the Books call'd *Apocrypha* are Canonical Scripture. 6. That

6. That the Church of *England* had no Power to Reform her self:

All which we deny, as contrary to Scripture and Reason.

Quest. 18 **Why do not you believe, that Extreme Unction is a Sacrament necessary to Salvation?**

Ans. 1. Because that Unction, or *anointing sick Persons*, Jam. 5. 14,15. was a miraculous Gift, and therefore not necessary to be continued.

2. Christ did never institute this miraculous Unction as a Sacrament.

3. The Unction they use in the Church of *Rome*, hath no miraculous effects.

4. The Apostles anointed sick Persons, that they might recover: In the Church of *Rome*, they anoint dying Persons, who are past Recovery.

5. In that place of St. *James*, the saving of the sick Person is ascribed to the Prayer of Faith, not to the anointing.

6. The Sacrament of the Lords Supper is sufficient to comfort the dying Man.

Quest. 19. **Why do you look upon that forbidding Priests to marry, as unlawful?**

Answ.

Anſw. 1. Becauſe St. *Paul* permits a Biſhop, and indeed all Clergy-men to marry, 1 *Tim.* 3. 2. 8. 11. *Tit.* 1. 6.

2. The ſame Apoſtle ſaith, to all Men in general, *It is better to marry than to burn*, 1 Cor. 7. 9.

3. The ſame Apoſtle calls forbidding to marry a Doctrine of Devils; 1 *Tim.* 4. 1. 3.

4. St. *Peter* himſelf, an Apoſtle and a Prieſt, was a married Man.

5. Several of the Biſhops in the Primitive Church were married Men; ſuch as *Spiridion*, *Chæreman*, *Phileas*, *Gregory Nyſſen*, *Gregory Nazianzen*, both Father and Son, *Hilary*, and others.

6. It was Pope *Hildebrand*, or *Gregory* VII. the ſame that firſt preſumed to depoſe Soveraign Princes, that made the Clergy renounce their Wives, contrary to Scripture; a Man guilty of the greateſt Crimes imaginable.

Queſt. 20. **Why do not you believe the Church of** Rome **infallible?**

Anſw. 1. Becauſe it is only a Pretence founded neither in Scripture, nor Antiquity.

2. It is a Church that hath err'd both in Doctrine and the Worſhip of God, moſt notoriouſly.

3. God hath no where promis'd to make any one Church infallible.

4. Themſelves are not agreed where this Infallibility lies, whether in the Pope, or in a general Council, or in the diffuſive body of Chriſtians.

5. The Word of God is the only infallible Rule to walk by.

6. There is no need of a viſible infallible Judge for deciding of Controverſies. For,

1*ſt*. Controverſies may be decided without ſuch a Judge, as they were in the Primitive Church, the Biſhops meeting in Council, and arguing againſt Hereticks from the Word of God.

2*d*. A meek, humble, peaceable, and charitable Temper, would decide Controverſies better than all the pretended infallible Judges in the World.

3*d*. We do not find, that when there were infallible Judges here on Earth, ſuch as Chriſt and his Apoſtles, that all Controverſies did ceaſe: Notwithſtanding their preſence, there were Schiſms and Hereſies, even among the Chriſtians, 1 *Cor*. 11. 19.

4*th*. For all the pretences of Infallibility in the Church of *Rome*, they cannot decide

decide the Controverſies that are among their own Members.

5*th.* Both Popes, and General Councils, have contradicted one another; and therefore neither of them can be infallible.

6*th.* The pretence of Infallibility in the Church of *Rome*, is nothing but a device to uphold their Temporal Grandeur and Dominion.

Queſt. 21. **Why do you think, the Church of** Rome **is in an Error in forbidding the reading of the Bible to the Common People.**

Anſw. 1. Becauſe Chriſt commands all ſorts of Men to read the Scriptures; *Joh.* 5. 39.

2. The *Berrhæans* are commended for ſearching the Scriptures; *Acts* 17. 11.

3. The Fathers in the Primitive Church, exhorted the People to the frequent reading of the Scriptures.

4. St. *Paul* charges the *Theſſalonians*, to take care that his Epiſtle be read to all the holy Brethren, 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 27.

5. In the Jewiſh Church every Family was to have the Law in their Houſes, and to teach it their Children diligently; *Deut.* 6. 7.

6. The pretence of the Obſcurity of the Scripture in many places, is inſignificant, ſince the Scripture is plain enough in things neceſſary to Salvation.

7. The Church of *Rome* in forbidding the Bible to the Laity, diſcovers her fear, and the weakneſs of her Cauſe, leaſt the People ſhould ſee her Errors, and forſake her.

Queſt. 22. **Why do not you believe, that the Books call'd Apocrypha, are Canonical Scripture?**

Anſw. 1. Becauſe the Oracles of the Old Teſtament were delivered to the Jewiſh Church, *Rom.* 3. 2. and theſe were not.

2. The Chriſtian Church receiv'd from the Jews no other Books of Canonical Scripture, but what are own'd as ſuch by the Church of *England.*

3. The *Apocrypha* were not written by Men inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt; and what is Scripture, muſt be by Inſpiration; 2 *Tim.* 3. 16.

4. Some of the Authors beg the Readers pardon for their Miſtakes, which is not the Language of the Holy Ghoſt.

5. The Antient Councils have rejected theſe *Apocrypha* as not Canonical, particularly

ticularly the Council of *Laodicea*.

6. In the Primitive Churches they read theſe *Apocrypha* only for the Inſtruction of Mens Manners; but did not reſolve their Faith into them, no more do we.

Queſt. 23. **Why do you find fault with the Church of Rome for aſſerting, that the Church of England, once a Member of her Communion, had no power to reform her ſelf?**

Anſw. 1. Becauſe every Church hath a natural right to ſhake off the Abuſes and Corruptions which are contrary to the Word of God.

2. It is God's Command to private Men, not to ſuffer themſelves to be deluded by the ſlight of Men, and cunning Craftineſs, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, and therefore much more is a National Church concern'd to do ſo.

3. In vain was any Reformation hoped for from the Biſhop and Clergy of the Roman Church.

4. It's the proper Office of the Biſhops of a National Church, to take notice what Errors creep into their Churches, and oppoſe them.

5. And that they have right to do ſo appears from the Examples the Church of *Judah* had in the times of *Jehoſhaphat*, or *Hezekiah*, or *Joſiah*.

6. In throwing off the power of the Pope of *Rome*, we did not throw off Obedience to a lawful Soveraign, but Subjection to an Uſurper.

7. We did no more than what the Orthodox Churches did after the *Arian* Councils of *Ariminum* and *Seleucia*, in ſetting up the *Nicene* Faith again, which thoſe powerful Councils had baniſh'd.

8. We made no new Religion, but reſtor'd the old; and built no new Houſe, but only ſwept out of the old the Rubbiſh which made it unwholeſom, and uninhabitable.

The End.

An Account of the Conference betwixt a Jeſuit of the Savoy *and my Self, the* 2d. *of* January. *Preſent Mr.* Stephens *on my ſide, Mrs.* Chamberlain, *and Mr.* Chamberlain, *and the Book-binder about whom the Conference was held (he having been ſix years of the Church of* Rome, *but ſomewhat unſatisfied) and Mr.* Lamb. *About Seven of the Clock at Night.*

THE firſt thing Diſcourſed was about the Doctrine of *Calviniſts*, which the Jeſuit ſaid, made God the Author of Sin.

I told him, that there are ſeveral Expreſſions, which if a favourable Conſtruction be put upon them will appear to be otherwiſe.

Next he fell upon *Luther*, who ſhould ſay that no Man could be damned if he would, but for his Infidelity.

I ſaid it was true, that God condemned no Man, that profeſſed himſelf a Chriſtian, but for his Infidelity.

The Jeſuit asked whether, if a Man committed Theft, he may be call'd an Infidel? I ſaid, he acted like an Infidel, and in that Act was ſo, becauſe he acted contrary to his Belief.

Mr. *Chamberlain* putting in ſomething about that place, 1 *Tim.* 2. about one Mediator. The Jeſuit argued, he wonderd we ſhould talk of one Mediator, when every Man that pray'd for the other was a Mediator.

I told him in a large Senſe he might be called ſo; but in the Controverſie before us, were meant Mediators which are religiouſly worſhipped.

Here happened a great rambling Diſcourſe about Faith, *As diſtinguiſhed from all good Works*; but I told them, that by Faith I did not mean the bare Aſſent to the Doctrine, but a practical Belief, as it takes in the whole Word of God, and living according to it.

The *Book-binder* was gone to call Mrs. *Chamberlain*, and coming again by this time: The Jeſuit ſaid, they were come to ſatisfie Perſons under ſome Doubts, and

and therefore muſt fall upon ſome more material Points, and ſince we Proteſtants ſent people to the Scripture; it was neceſſary we ſhould begin to talk of the Rule of Faith, and therefore he deſired to know; how we knew the Scripture to be the Word of God, and from whom we had received our Bible?

I told him, we had received it from the Catholick Church, whoſe Teſtimony was very conſiderable in this Caſe.

He ask'd hereupon, when we went off from the Church? From what Church we did immediately receive it?

I anſwered him, both from the *Weſtern* or *Roman*; and from the Churches of the *Eaſt*. However I told him, I would fairly grant him, that we had received it immediately from the Church of *Rome*, and I deſired him to make the beſt of it.

Here he asked, how we could receive the true Bible from a corrupt Church?

I asked him, whether I might not receive a Pearl from a Chimney Sweeper?

He ſaid, we looked upon them for Rogues and Raſcals.

Where-

Whereupon I told him, we give them no ſuch Language: However ſince he uſed theſe Names; whether a Man might not receive a 100 *l.* in very good Money from Rogues and Raſcals.

He then argued, That we look'd upon the Church of *Rome* as a corrupt Church; and how can we be ſure, that we have the true Bible, ſince we cannot be ſure that a corrupt Church had not corrupted it.

I told him, that they confeſſed themſelves they had not corrupted it; and beſides, they could not corrupt it, for the Cheat would have been found out, by the comparing of ancient and modern Copies.

He then asked again, what we counted the Rule of Faith?

I told him, the Scripture.

He asked, whether with a true Interpretation or without it?

I told him, the Scripture with true Interpretation?

He then replied, how we ſhould know the true Interpretation.

I told him, things neceſſary to Salvation needed no great Interpretation, and the words are deliver'd ſo plainly, that

any

any one that runs may Read it.

He then asked, whether every Man was a true Interpreter of Scripture?

I ſaid, every Man had a Judgment of Diſcretion; but there was no Queſtion, there were ſeveral Perſons that might miſ-interpret it; but if a Man went this way to work, read the Scripture, pray for Illumination, and go to it with a pure Intention; he might underſtand things neceſſary, and he could not err damnably, and in things more difficult, conſult by his Guides.

He ſaid, this would eſtabliſh every Man in his Religion, and a *Mahometan* ought to be directed by his Guide; and why muſt we follow the Guides of our Church, and not the Guides of the *Roman* Church?

I told him, that People bred, and born, and baptized in this Church; had greater reaſon to conſult their own Guides, than others; becauſe they had greater Obligations to them.

Still he urged, no Man could be aſcertain'd of the true Interpretation of the Scripture without ſome Judge.

I desired him to name that Judge over and over, but could not bring him to it.

I know not how the Discourse came in here about different Interpretations; and I said the Writers of their Church differ'd in their Interpretation.

He said none of their Writers differ'd from one another in the Interpretation of places relating to Articles of Faith.

I asked him, what he thought of *Extreme Unction?*

He said it was an Article of Faith.

Very well, said I, then I'll prove that *Cajetan* interprets that place of St. *James* of another *Unction*, and saith, contrary to the Council of *Trent*, that *Extreme Unction* cannot be proved from that place.

He said, the Council of *Trent* did not denounce *Anathema* to him that should interpret that place of St. *James*, of another *Unction*.

I then fetcht him down out of my Study *the Council of Trent*, and shew'd him that, *Sess.* 14. it did denounce *Anathema* to them that should not believe.

So

So then he ſaid, they laid not the ſtrain upon that place; but St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* had ſpoken of it too.

I challeng'd him to ſhew me any place in St. *Paul* or *Peter*, that had ſpoken of this *Unction*.

He then turn'd it off, and ſaid he did not mean it of any expreſs mention, but only that the Apoſtles did not uſe to contradict themſelves.

After this either the Jeſuit, or Mr. *Stephens*, moved it that there might be another Meeting, and that we ſhould write down all.

I told him I agreed to it; and accordingly we appointed *Wedneſday* next the 4*th* of *January*, at Four a Clock in the Afternoon, and ſo they departed, the Jeſuit and Mr. *Lamb*; The Bookbinder and Mr. *Chamberlain*, and his Mother, and another young Woman. And the Bookbinder and Mr. *Stephens*, and my ſelf, and *Chamb.* and his Mother ſtaid a while; when I fell in diſcourſe about Invocation of Saints, and fetcht him down the *Office of the Virgin* Mary; *The Contempt of the Glories of the Virgin* Mary; and ſhew'd him, that they did not only pray to Saints to pray for them,

but

but begg'd the ſame Bleſſings of them they did of God.

The Bookbinder ſaid, *the Contemplations of the Glory of the Bleſſed Virgin* was not allow'd of in their Church: He ſaid if they did more than pray to Saints to pray for them, he did not righly underſtand his Church.

The End.

A DISSWASIVE FROM POPERY; BEING A LETTER TO A LADY TO

Preserve her from Apostacy from the Communion of the Church of *ENGLAND.*

LONDON;
Printed for *W. Hinchman*, *S. Keble*, and *D. Brown.* 1697.

A DISSWASIVE *from Popery, being a Letter to a Lady to preſerve her from Apoſtacy from the Communion of the Church of* England.

Madam,

AND are you indeed got into the only Catholick Church? And are you ſure the Men you have lately believed have not deceived you, as you fancy we have done? (for tho' you may be ſo charitable as to think, that we have not intentionally cozened you; yet ſince you cannot ſuppoſe us to be both in the Right, you muſt neceſſarily conclude, that we have at leaſt ignorantly abuſed and impoſed upon you) and did you ever rightly conſider what a truly Catholick Church does mean? Men of Senſe and Reaſon always believed, that a Church which holds the truly Catholick Faith, is a true and ſound Member of the Catholick Church;

and dares Malice it ſelf ſay, that we do not hold the Apoſtles, the *Nicene*, and *Athanaſius*'s Creed? The Church of *Rome* her ſelf confeſſes, that theſe Creeds contain the truly Catholick Faith: And moſt certainly, when the *Nicene* Council was celebrated, and in *Athanaſius*'s time, that Church was counted a ſound Member of the Catholick Church, that held that Catholick Faith, which is expreſſed in thoſe Creeds; and do we not hold that Faith? Do we not ſtand up at it to expreſs our Readineſs to defend it? And what have we done, that we muſt not be counted a Catholick Church? Is it becauſe we will not receive things which the Church of *Rome* hath ſince added to the Catholick Faith? Is it becauſe we will not admit of the Doctrines which that Church was firſt induced to believe by the Darkneſs and Ignorance of the Ages it lived in, and at laſt loath to part withal for fear they ſhould be thought to have been ſo long in an Error? Is it becauſe we will not yield to things which we apprehend to be directly againſt the Word of God, and deſtructive to that Catholick Faith the Chriſtian World hath profeſſed in all Ages? Is it becauſe

becauſe we will not deceive the People of the Cup in the Bleſſed Sacrament, which Chriſt intended as a mighty comfort to them? Is it becauſe we will not believe the Miracle of Tranſubſtantiation againſt four of our Senſes, and Reaſon, and Scripture to boot? Is it becauſe we will not ſuffer the Worſhip of God, or that which is very like it, to be given to Creatures, becauſe of the very appearance of the evil of Idolatry, which we are commanded to ſhun, as much as Idolatry it ſelf? Is it becauſe we will not believe a Purgatory Fire, which cleanſeth little, but Peoples Purſes of their Money? Is it becauſe we will not indulge the Pride and Arrogance of a Man at *Rome*, who having firſt wheedled the Chriſtian Princes out of their Means and Power, hath at laſt made that Power and Riches hereditary to his Succeſſors, under a pretence of a Legacy from Chriſt? Is it becauſe we will not believe, contrary to the Apoſtles Rule, that publick Prayers, which are intended for the benefit and underſtanding of the Multitude, muſt be ſaid in a Tongue unknown to the People? Theſe muſt certainly be the Reaſons, why we cannot now paſs with

the Church of *Rome* for Members of the Catholick Church. That these things were not in the Antient Catholick Creeds, I hope you are convinced; for you have read them over, and found none of all these Additions in them: And now I beg of you, in the name, and by the mercy of that Jesus in whom you believe, to judge, which is most likely to be the truly Catholick Church, ours or theirs? Ours that keeps to the truly antient Catholick Faith, or theirs that hath added things contrary to Scripture, and Reason, and Antiquity? And dare you continue in a Church where your very Communion with it is an Approbation of their Actions, which are directly contrary to the command of Christ? Can there be any thing more contrary to it than their denying the Cup to the Laity? And when you receive the Sacrament but in one kind, contrary to Christ's Command, do not you sin and allow of the Sin of that Church you are in? Is not your Disobedience to Christ's Command a Sin, or can you imagine that you are more obliged to obey Men than Christ himself? You confess you dare not live in any one Sin; But how

dare

dare you live in this Sin? You talk of the benefit of Confeſſion and Abſolution, when that very Prieſt to whom you confeſs, and who abſolves you, lives in that Sin you are guilty of, and neither abſolves himſelf nor you from it; and you both continue in it, as if the Blind had a mind to lead the Blind? How dare you act thus againſt your Reaſon and Conſcience? Are you not afraid when you are going to confeſs, that God will laugh at your Mock Confeſſion, ſince you neither confeſs that Sin of living contrary to Chriſt's Command about the Cup, nor are willing to part with it? Tell me not here that you drink the Blood of Chriſt in eating his Fleſh; if ſo, to what purpoſe doth the Prieſt conſecrate Wine for himſelf, if he drinks the Blood of Chriſt in eating his Fleſh? But ſuppoſe the Bread were tranſubſtantiated into the Fleſh and Blood of Chriſt, you know that the not giving the Cup of Bleſſing to thoſe that come to the Lord's Supper, is contrary to Chriſt's Inſtitution, who diſtinctly conſecrated the Cup, and gave that to his Diſciples, who were Repreſentatives of all Believers, as well as the Bread, and peremp-

torily commanded, *Drink ye all of this*, and, I hope, you do not call eating the conſecrated Wafer drinking the Wafer. But let Us grant you your ſtrange Doctrine, that you do participate of the Blood of Chriſt in eating the conſecrated Wafer, who gave your Church Authority to alter Chriſt's Inſtitution? How can Men diſpence with an expreſs Law of God? Can they annull what God would have Eſtabliſhed, and continue to the Worlds end? And can you conſent to ſo great a Sacriledge? Doth not ſome horror ſeize on you, when you ſeriouſly think that you approve of the Prieſts ſinning againſt ſo notorious a Precept, and which he that runs may read? And pray Madam, wherein have you bettered your ſelf in going over to the Roman Church? Is this your proficiency in Religion to forſake a Church, where you felt the lively Oracles of Heaven coming warm upon your Soul, and to joyn your ſelf to a Church, where you hear nothing but Latine Prayers, and where the Prieſt, if he be not a good man, may as well Curſe you as Bleſs you, for any thing you underſtand of his Language or Devotion? Is this

Your

Your proficiency in Religion to leave a Church where you were taught to Worſhip God in Spirit and in Truth, and now to cleave to one where they teach your Prayers to go upon Crutches of Crucifixes, Beads, and Images? Doth this look like that Noble Religion which Chriſt taught the World, and whoſe deſign was to advance our Rational Souls by Contemplation and Meditation? O, Madam, you are too Young to know the Tricks of that Church you live in; they are more politick Heads than yours is, that had the contriving of it. Bold Men, that had Learnt not to Bluſh at a Lye, and then thought it their intereſt to Hector the World into a belief of it. We that can Read Books as well as they, and know the Hiſtory of the Church as well as they, can ſee through all theſe devices, which they perceiving are angry with Us for diſcovering the Cheat. What was it Madam, that you wanted in our Church to carry you to Heaven? did you want that which the Apoſtles and the Primitive Chriſtians never wanted? I mean did you want more Articles of Faith than they ſubſcribed and believed! If you wanted that, we Confeſs we

could not ſupply you, for we dare ſay nothing, and believe nothing with Divine Faith, but what *Moſes* and the Prophets, and Chriſt and his Apoſtles have taught us. If the Scripture contains all things neceſſary to Salvation, then we teach all that. If the Church of *ROME* knows more Articles than Chriſt or his Apoſtles knew of; we will admire her inſolence, but cannot ſatisfie her unreaſonable deſire. Did you want ſtrictneſs of Life in our Church? If all the Commands of the Goſpel can make you Holy, We teach them all and preſs them upon the People, and I preſume you do not aim to be Holier than Chriſt and his Apoſtles would have you to be. Hath the Church of *ROME* another Goſpel to teach you than that we did inſtruct you in? if they have, much good it may do them, We are not fond of the Apoſtle's Curſe, *Should an Angel from Heaven bring another Goſpel to you let him be accurſed.* I know your common Plea that We Proteſtants cannot rightly interpret the Scripture, becauſe We pretend to no infallibility. And do you blame Us for not being ſo impudent as the Church of *ROME?*

There

There is no Proteſtant but would be glad there were an infallible Interpreter of Scripture inſtituted by God and recommended to Mankind.

But where ſhall we find him? Who is it that God hath imparted this Honour to? If you ſay the Fathers, you know not what you ſay, for the Fathers differ many times as much in interpretation of the Scipture, and are as contrary to one another as any Men. If you ſay the Church that's a hard Word; if you mean Chriſt's Univerſal Church, diſperſed all the World over, you muſt tell us where it is that this Church hath left an infallible Comment upon the Bible, and how is it poſſible for a man that will be reſolved in a point to go to all Chriſtian People in the World; if you ſay the Church of *ROME*, you muſt firſt ſhew Us her Commiſſion for this infallible interpretation. Secondly, you muſt prove She hath infallibly interpreted the Scriptures, and that thoſe interpretations are infallible in all places. Thirdly, you muſt agree among your ſelves what part of your Church is infallible, whether the Pope, or an Univerſal Council, or all Chriſtian People, or whether all

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theſe together. To ſay, that this Infallibility lies in the Church, though you know not where, is to ſay a Needle lies in a Bottle of Hay, and he hath good luck that finds it. Nay, I think, the Church of *ROME* hath been ſo modeſt, that notwithſtanding all her pretences to infallibility, She never hath dared to obtrude a Comment on the Bible as infallible, nor did I ever ſee any Interpretation of the Bible made either by Pope or Council which hath pretended to Infallibility. If that Church be infallible why do not their own Divines agree in Interpretation of Scripture? if there be an infallible Senſe of the Scriptures in that Church, then the Members of that Church are mad not to keep to that infallible Senſe, eſpecially if they know where to fetch it, and they offer great injuries and affronts to their Church in differing ſo much about interpretation of Scripture, when their Church can give them an infallible Senſe of it. For that Church having, as they pretend, the Holy Ghoſt to guide them in all things, I ſuppoſe that Spirit aſſiſts her in Interpretation of one place of Scripture as well as in another: if they

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ſay it doth infallibly aſſiſt them in ſome places and not in all, they deſtroy their own Principle, and how ſhall a man be ſure, that juſt in thoſe Points that are in diſpute between Us and them, they are Infallible? Is the Spirit divided? Or is he not always the ſame? Or doth not he exert his power upon all occaſions?

Madam, who ſo blind as thoſe that will not ſee? Who ſees not that the pretence of Infallibility is nothing but a juggle, a device to maintain a tripple Crown, and an Engine to carry on a temporal Authority? God indeed hath promiſed that his Church diſperſed thro' the World, ſhall laſt to the World's end, and that the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt her, but that promiſe differs very much from a promiſe of Infallibility; and ſuppoſe it did inferr an Infallibility, how comes the particular Church of *ROME* to ingroſs it to her ſelf, that is at the beſt but a Member, and a very unſound one, of Chriſt's Univerſal Church? It is one thing to be ſecured againſt being deſtroyed, and another to be free from all poſſibility of Errour. There is no doubt but a ſober rational man, that prays earneſtly for illumi-

illumination, and reads the Scripture much, and conſiders the Circumſtances the Holy Writers were in when they writ, and the Occaſions of their writing, and hath the advantage of Learning, of Languages, and Hiſtory, may give a very true Interpretation of Scriptures, ſuch an Interpretation as no man can rationally contradict, tho' he hath not recourſe to a Viſible infallible Guide, and tho' himſelf be not infallible. Things may be very certain, tho' they are not infallibly ſo, and he that can make things out ſo that a prudent man cannot but give conſent to them, and hath no juſt cauſe to doubt of their truth, may juſtly challenge belief from other men. But I will not inſiſt upon this point becauſe I never heard you ſpeak much of it. I will come a little cloſer to thoſe reaſons, that moved you to go over to the Roman Church, whereof the principal was this, that you were troubled in mind upon the account of your Sins, & could get no ſatisfaction in Our Church, tho' you ſought it, like *Eſau*, with tears; whereas you did no ſooner confeſs to a Roman Prieſt, and receive Abſolution, but you preſently found unſpeakable comfort.

And are you ſure, Madam, that the peace

peace and ſatisfaction, you found in that Church was not deluſion? you tremble at that word; but lets conſider the Nature of your peace. When you were in our Church, either you did truly repent of all your Sins, or you did not. If you did not, moſt certainly you could have no ſolid peace, but if you did truly repent, as you ſay you did, what could hinder you from applying the Promiſes made to penitent Sinners, to your ſelf, which are the true grounds of comfort and ſatisfaction? may be you wanted a Voice from heaven to confirm the Promiſe of the Goſpel, but have you ſince heard ſuch a Voice from heaven in the Church of *Rome*? I think not; if you truly repented in our Church, then certainly by the Word of God you were aſſured that your Sins were pardoned, and if they were pardoned, why ſhould you not comfort your ſelf with that pardon? That which makes you rejoice now, is becauſe you believe your Sins are pardoned; but if when you were of our Church, you verily believed you truly repented, you could not but believe that your Sins were pardoned, and conſequently you might have taken as much comfort, as you do now. But the Miniſter

niſter of the Church of *England*, you ſay, gave me no abſolution, which the Roman Prieſt did. Why, Madam, did any of our Miniſters deny your Abſolution, when you could aſſure them that your Repentance was ſincere? did you ever ask Abſolution, and were you refuſed? Nay, I appeal to your Conſcience, did not thoſe Miniſters you converſed withal aſſure you over and over, that you need not doubt of the pardon of your Sins ſo long as you did deteſt and abhor them, and watch, and ſtrive, and pray againſt them, and were ſincerely reſolved to commit them no more, and did avoid the very occaſions of Evil? and what was this but Abſolution, which however you might have had performed with greater Ceremony, if you had had a mind to it. It is no very hard matter to gueſs at the riſe and progreſs of your peace and ſatisfaction in the Roman Church. All new things pleaſe, and provided they have but a good face, allure our fancy, and this being pleaſed, it's very natural to defend them, and having once defended them, our Love to them advances, and by degrees we think our Honour and Credit is too far engaged

engaged to part with them. We ſee how Children are quieted with new trifles (pardon the uncourtly compariſon, I know not how to ſhun it) and the new object, they never ſaw before, ſurprizes and charms them, makes them fix their Eyes upon it and cry, if they cannot have it. In the nature of Children we ſee our own, and embracing new objects, which our ſickly fancy is roving after, is but the Scene of Childrens longing for new play things, changed; the Novelty of the thing you were venturing upon, the new Church (new indeed, new to you, and new to Almighty God) which you were to joyn your ſelf to, the Stool of Confeſſion in the Church, and the Prieſts new habit, and mortified face (which perhaps he owes more to his Country, than to his Vertue) and affected gravity, and aſſuring of you that their abſolution had a wonderful Vertue and Efficacy, all theſe together ſurprized you, and raiſed your expectation, and ſtruck ſome kind of reverence into you. Your mind being thus poſſeſſed with the Idea's of theſe new things you never tried before, and working upon your affections, and moving your will

to confeſs to this man of Wonders, you naturally fell into a fancy, that ſo much Formality and Ceremony different from that you had been uſed to in our Church, had more charms in it, than our plain and honeſt way, and then laid the ſtreſs of your pardon upon the new Prieſts abſolution in that formal manner, wherewith your fancy being impregnated, it ſoon diffuſed a cheerful air in your countenance, and raiſed ſome gladneſs in your heart, becauſe you had now done ſomething more than ordinary, as an Antidote againſt your Sin. And from hence aroſe your pretended peace and ſatisfaction, or deluſion rather, becauſe you laid the ſtreſs of your pardon upon the abſolution of that Roman Prieſt, and not upon the ſincerity of your repentance. If a Prieſt could forgive Sin's, whether men Repent or no, Then indeed you might have laid the ſtreſs of your Pardon on that forgiveneſs of the Prieſt, but ſince by your own Confeſſion, that abſolution of the Prieſt ſignifies nothing except people truly repent, for you to build your comfort on that Abſolution, when it ſhould have been founded upon your ſincere Repentance, cannot but

be

be a falſe fire, and a counterfeit comfort; if you ſay, you did not fetch your Peace from that Abſolution, but from the ſincerity of your Repentance, you catch your ſelf; for if your true Repentance muſt be the foundation of it, then you might have taken the ſame comfort in our Church: If you ſtill reply, you could not, you only mean you would not, for true Repentance is true Repentance in any Church; and if true Repentance cauſes true comfort, it would have cauſed true comfort in our Church as well as in the Roman, and therefore there muſt be ſome cheat in this comfort.

The fancy you have ſince taken up, that the reaſon why you found comfort in the Church of *Rome*, upon your Confeſſion and Abſolution, and none in ours, muſt needs be, becauſe the Prieſts of that Church are true Prieſts, and thoſe of ours are not, is as ſolid as your Peace. If we have no true Prieſts in the Church of *England*, then moſt certainly the Church of *Rome* hath none. The Biſhops, which in the beginning of our Reformation did ordain Biſhops, Prieſts, and Deacons among us, were ordained by Biſhops of that Church; and if the Character of

Orders, by their own confeſſion, be indelible, then it was not all the Thunders and Lightnings of Excommunication at *Rome* could annul it. It's true, your ghoſtly Father very confidently tells you, (a Quality incident to that ſort of Men) That our firſt Proteſtant Biſhops never received Orders from Biſhops of the Church of *Rome*; but one would admire what Spirit doth poſſeſs theſe Men, that they dare contradict all the publick authentick Records we have of their being conſecrated by Biſhops of the Church of *Rome*; they might as well deny, that there were no ſuch Kings of *England* as *Henry* VII. and *Henry* VIII. (for we have nothing but publick Records to ſhew for it) as deny that the Biſhops of the Reformation were never conſecrated by Biſhops of the Roman Perſwaſion. I am perſwaded that if any Papiſt ſhould come into trouble about the title of an Eſtate he hath, and did but know that the name of his Anceſtors, the manner of the Conveyance, and his juſt Title were in ſome publick Record or Regiſter, he would ſoon make uſe of it, alledge it as a ſufficient proof, and thank God for preſerving a Record

Record that is ſo much for his advantage. I know not what can be a better Teſtimony in matters of fact next to Revelation, than publick Records and Regiſters; and we dare venture our Reputation upon it, that in the Authentick Regiſters of the reſpective Arch-biſhops of *Canterbury*, where fear of being counted Knaves and Fools, for putting in things contrary to what was publickly known, may juſtly be ſuppoſed to have kept the publick Notaries from aſſerting things notoriouſly falſe. In theſe Regiſters I ſay it will be found, what Succeſſion our firſt Proteſtant Biſhops had; how Arch-biſhop *Parker*, the firſt Arch-biſhop of *Canterbury* under Queen *Elizabeth* (to go no higher) was conſecrated *December* 17. 1559. by four perſons then actually Biſhops, and who had formerly been Ordained by Biſhops of the Church of *Rome*, (*viz.*) *William Barlow* in *Henry* the Eighth's days Biſhop of St. *Davids*, under *Edward* the ſixth Biſhop of *Bath* and *Wells*, under Queen *Mary* driven into Exile, and returned under Queen *Elizabeth*, *John Story* formerly Biſhop of *Chicheſter*, *Miles Coverdale* formerly Biſhop of *Exeter*, and

John Hodgkins Biſhop Suffragan of *Bedford.* Not to mention that the Queen's Letters Patents (in caſe any of the other ſhould be ſick or forced to be abſent) were directed to three Biſhops more, that had formerly been Popiſh Biſhops, and were turned Proteſtants, (*viz.*) *Anthony* Biſhop of *Landaff*, *John* Biſhop Suffragan of *Thedford*, and *John Bale* Biſhop of *Oſſery.* But all this hath been ſo clearly demonſtrated out of the publick Records, firſt by Mr. *Maſon*, and ſince by Arch-biſhop *Bramhal*, that he that writes of it can only tranſcribe out of them; and thoſe that deny theſe Records muſt be Men of ſtrange Foreheads, and of the greateſt Diſingenuity. From theſe Men that had their Prieſthood from the Church of *Rome*, our Prieſthood is lineally derived; ſo that if our Prieſthood be not valid, theirs cannot be; and if Hereſie doth not make the Epiſcopal Office void, nor diſable a Man from conferring Epiſcopal Order on other Men (as is evident from the ſecond Council of *Nice*, with your Church an Oecumenical Council, which received Biſhop *Anatolius*, though conſecrated by *Dioſcorus*, a Heretical Biſhop;) if, I ſay, Hereſie doth

doth not make the Epiſcopal Order void, then ſuppoſe we were Hereticks, our Prieſthood, which is derived from Popiſh Biſhops that turned Proteſtants, muſt be a true Prieſthood ſtill; and to this purpoſe I remember one of your Church ſaid lately, *Once a Prieſt, for ever a Prieſt.*

Madam, if you deſire to know the Truth, be honeſt and ſincere; you ſhould act like a Perſon that hath a mind to be ſatisfied, and ſearch the publick Records, and till then believe not every Tale that's told you: The common plea of your Prieſts, that our Records are ſophiſticated, and that we have put in what we pleaſe, argues only Boldneſs and Ignorance, when they can ſhew neither where, nor when, nor by whom they were corrupted. Thoſe that talk ſo, ſeem neither to underſtand what a publick ſolemn thing the Conſecration of a Biſhop is in *England*, nor to reflect, how difficult it is to fill a publick Regiſter with Falſities, as to matters of fact, when there are ſo many hundred Men that know what is done at ſuch a time, and view the Records, and would moſt certainly ſpeak of it, if they found a flaw

in the Relation. But if we ſhould deal thus with the Church of *Rome*, queſtion all their Regiſters in the *Vatican*, and ſay, which we might do with far greater reaſon, that they are things packed and invented by Men, that have a mind to keep up a Faction, I know what Language we ſhould meet withal. But will you boaſt, ſay you, of having derived your Orders from the Church of *Rome*, when you believe the Church of *Rome* to be an idolatrous Church? Madam, it is not the Office of a Biſhop in your Church we find fault withal, but the Abuſes of it. A Church that's guilty of very great corruption both in Doctrine and Manners, may have ſomething that's good and allowable; and he that retains that, is not therefore guilty of her corruption, nor eſpouſes her Errors. Your Idolatry is one thing, and your Orders are another. The Jews did take many good things from the Heathens, and the Chriſtians many commendable things from the Jews; but that neither made the Jews approve of the Heatheniſh Worſhip, nor the Chriſtians allow of the Jewiſh Errors. We are not ſo diſingenious, as to make the breach between

you

you and us wider than needs. So far as you go with Scripture and true Antiquity, we hold with you; where you contradict both, we cannot with a ſafe Conſcience bear you company. He that ſees a Pearl lye among a great deal of Traſh, if he take the Pearl, is not therefore obliged to take the Rubbiſh too; and if we have derived our Orders from you, that infers no neceſſity that we muſt therefore conſent to your Notorious Deprivations of the antient Simplicity of the Goſpel. The Chriſtians heretofore, that approved of the Baptiſm of the Donatiſts, did not therefore preſently acknowledge the Truth of their Opinions; and he that ſhould take a good cuſtom from the Turks, cannot be therefore ſaid to approve of all things that are in the *Alcoran*.

Madam, There is nothing more eaſie than to cavil at the moſt prudent Action in the World, eſpecially where People take a ſlight ſurvey of things, and do not with Serioufneſs and Deliberation weigh the Circumſtances of the Fact, and do not examine the inſide as well as the outſide; and I muſt confeſs, upon the beſt Examination of your Actions and

Proceedings in this Revolt to the Church of *Rome*, you never took the right way to be ſatisfied; for inſtead of pondering the Arguments and Motives of our Departure from the Church of *Rome*, and of the Reaſons we alledge for our Church and Doctrine; you made it your chief Imployment to read their Books, and believed what they ſaid to be Oracles, for no other Reaſon but becauſe they talked with greater Arrogance and Confidence. If you ſay, that you could not judge of Arguments having never been bred a Scholar, I would but ask you how you durſt change your Religion then? Did you change it without reaſon and without ground? and if you are not able to weigh the ſtrength of Arguments, how can you be ſure that you are in the true Church at this time? It is not talk, but Arguments that muſt demonſtrate the Truth of a Religion; and if you have not ſufficiently weighed the Arguments of both ſides, it is a thouſand to one you may ſtill be in the wrong way; and you know not but you may be as much out now, as you were formerly. Madam, ſo great a thing as the change of your Religion, upon which no

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leſs than Eternity depends, might juſtly have challenged ſome years ſtudy, before you had reſolved upon it. To do a thing of this nature upon ſo ſlight a Survey, conſider whether it doth not argue Raſhneſs and Weakneſs, rather than Piety and Devotion. To leave a Religion you have been bred and born in, a Religion founded upon the Word of God, and which you had liberty to examine by the Scripture, upon reading a Popiſh Book or two, without diving to the bottom of the ſeveral Controverſies, without reflecting on the Importance of the Points in queſtion, without ſtudying a conſiderable time which Religion comes neareſt to Scripture, and which goes fartheſt off; is ſuch an Argument of Impatience, that you only ſeem to have yielded to a dangerous Temptation of the Devil. If the Controverſies between the Church of *Rome* and us, are ſo intricate, as you ſay, and above your capacity to dive into them, you have then run over to that Church in the dark, and have as little reaſon to be ſatisfied with your Proceedings, as you believe you have with our way of Worſhip. You plead, that you have been ſitting up whole Nights,

Nights, and weeping and praying, that God would diſcover to you which is the true way to Salvation, and from that time forward you found Inclinations to go over to that Church; and is this a ſufficient Argument to juſtifie your Forwardneſs? When you had already begun to doubt, whether our Church were a true Church or no, becauſe you found not that Satisfaction in it your ſickly Deſires wanted; it was then an eaſie matter to give ear to confident People, that magiſterially and peremptorily aſſured you, that you would find Satisfaction in their Church; and being fed with this hope, your Inclinations to that Church grew ſtronger every day, as our Mother *Eve*, the hopes of being like God, ſuggeſted to her by the Serpent, did egg and ſpur her on to eat of the fatal Tree.

We do not forbid People to pray to God, to lead or direct them into the right way: (though ſometimes it may be a perfect tempting of God, when People are in the right way, to deſire God to diſcover to them, by a ſign of their own choice, whether they are in it or no.) But then if we pray to God to direct us,

us, we muſt not neglect the means God hath appointed in order to our Satisfaction, but muſt compare Scripture with Scripture, and Books with Books, and Arguments with Arguments; and ſearch which Religion agrees moſt with the Doctrines and Practices of Chriſt and his Apoſtles; and as the Noble *Berrheans* did, examine all the Doctrines obtruded to our Belief, by the Scripture; and doing thus, and continuing this ſearch, and theſe Prayers together, no doubt but God in his own good time, will anſwer us and direct us. But to pray to God to direct us, and not to uſe the means, in the uſe of which he hath promiſed to direct us, we do in a manner mock him, or deſire him to work a Miracle for us, or to vouchſafe us ſome extraordinary Revelation, when we have *Moſes* and the Prophets, and may hear them. And I am confident, had you joyned this way with your Prayer, examined the Doctrines of the Church of *Rome*, and compared them with the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ſeen whether there be any thing like it in the Bible, and ſearched whether Chriſt and his Apoſtles ever taught ſuch Doctrines,

and

and done all this, not ſlightly, but ſeriouſly and ſolidly, it's impoſſible you could ever have turned Papiſt; for if our Goſpel be true, that Religion can never be true, for there is nothing in the World can run more counter to the Goſpel, than the Doctrines of that Church, wherein we differ from them, and they had need put the Bible among prohibited Books; for ſhould the People have liberty freely to peruſe it, the Church of *Rome* would grow very thin and deſpicable.

I am ſenſible your Prieſts find fault with our Tranſlation of the Bible, and cry out, that there are great defects in it; but when they talk ſo, they had need talk to Women, not to Men of Learning, and that undeſtand Greek and Hebrew, the Languages in which the Word was originally written. The Honeſty of our Tranſlators appears ſufficiently from hence, becauſe if any Sentence in the Bible be capable of a double Senſe, they expreſs the one in the Text, and the other in the Margin; and where they do but in the leaſt vary from the Original, they either diſcover it by the Italick Character, or give you notice of

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it in the Margin, than which there can be nothing more honeſt. And let any Papiſt of you all ſhew us, wherein any thing in our Bibles is ill tranſlated out of Malice or Deſign, or expreſſed in words, which the Original will not bear.

If we examine Tranſlations by the Original, then ſure I am, there is few Tranſlations go further from it, than the Vulgar Latin, or the Rhemiſt Teſtament, as were an eaſie matter to prove, if I intended more than a Letter.

You are much taken with their Mortifications and Penances, which you ſay we have not in our Church: But it's a ſign, Madam, you did not rightly underſtand our Religion: We are ſo far from condemning Mortification and Severity of Life, that we do commend it, provided it be in order to ſubdue the body of Sin, and to raiſe our ſelves to a greater pitch of Vertue; provided theſe Severities be ſeparated from all opinion of Merit, and from an opinion of their being ſatisfactory, and expiatory, and uſed only as helps, to work in us a perfect Deteſtation of Sin. And I will aſſure you there are more in the Church of *England*, that uſe Severities in this hum-

humble holy way, than you are aware of.

We indeed do not ordinarily inflict them on all perſons, becauſe we know not there Conſtitution, nor what their nature will bear, nor have we any command for it in the Word of God; but theſe things we leave to every Man's Diſcretion, urging, that where Sins require ſtronger Remedies, there Men ought to make uſe of them; and if their Corruptions will not be gone by Reaſonings and Arguments, that there they muſt inflict Mulcts and Penalties on themſelves to drive the Unclean Spirit out. Though I muſt ſay ſtill, that Religious Severities and Auſterities are not certain ſigns of a true Religion; for Heathens do uſe them as much as Chriſtians, nay more than Chriſtians, witneſs the *Brahmanes* in the *Indies*, and the Religious *Pagans* diſperſed through all the Eaſtern parts; and if you conclude, that therefore the Church of *Rome* muſt be in the right, becauſe they inflict great Pennances and Severities, and make daily uſe of them, I am afraid you only forbear turning Turk or Heathen, becauſe you never ſaw their far greater Severities

ties in Religion, than the Church of *Rome* can boaſt of: But ſtill the Proteſtant Church hath not the real Body and Blood of Chriſt in the Holy Sacrament, which the Church of *Rome* hath: And are you ſure the Church of *Rome* hath it? I am perſwaded you did never taſte it, nor ſee it, nor feel it, nor ſmell it, and how do you know it? What? becauſe the Prieſts of that Church do tell you ſo? No, ſay you, it is becauſe Chriſt ſaith in expreſs terms, *this is my Body*. And here, I confeſs, I ſtand amazed, that Men, with Learning and Reaſon about them, can ſink into an opinion ſo contradictory, that, if all the conſequences of it be conſidered, there is nothing in nature can be more abſurd, or irrational; and the Church of *Rome* had need oblige Men to deny both their Reaſon and Senſes, to believe a Tranſubſtantiation. Here indeed a Faith is neceſſary ſtrong enough to remove Mountains; and though never any Miracles were wrought, but were wrought on purpoſe to convince our Senſes, yet here we muſt believe one which neither Senſe nor Reaſon can diſcover. When Chriſt gave the Sacrament to his Diſciples,

ſaith

ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Corinth.* 11. 24. *He brake the Bread, and ſaid, Take eat, this is my Body, which is broken for you.* It is a wonderful thing, that the word *is*, in the firſt Sentence, *this is my Body*, ſhould have a literal Senſe, and in the very next Sentence, pronounced with the ſame breath, cannot admit of a literal Senſe; for the word *is*, in the ſecond Sentence muſt neceſſarily ſtand for *ſhall be*, becauſe Chriſt's Body, when he gave the Bread, was not yet broken: If it will not admit of a literal Senſe in the very next Sentence, becauſe of the Abſurdity that would follow, that Chriſt was crucified, before he was crucified; why ſhould we underſtand it in the firſt Sentence literally, when the Abſurdity is far greater? Nay, that the word *is* ſhould not be capable of being underſtood literally in the ſecond eſſential part of the Sacrament, *This Cup* is *the New Teſtament*; that here I ſay it ſhould import, and can import nothing elſe, but ſignifies, or *is a ſign of the New Teſtament*; and yet muſt not be underſtood ſo in the firſt part of the Sacrament, is a thing we cannot comprehend: And when the Apoſtle, ſpeaking of Lord's Supper or Eucha-

Euchariſt, 1 *Cor.* 10. 16. The Cup of Bleſſing which we bleſs, *is it not the Communion of the Blood of Chriſt?* and the Bread which we break, *is it not the Communion of the Body of Chriſt?* Let the rigideſt Papiſt, that hath not quite baniſhed his Reaſon, tell me, how he will make Senſe of the word *is* here, except he underſtand it figuratively; moſt certainly it cannot be underſtood literally; for the Cup is not that Communion, but is a ſign of it: One would admire, how Men can be ſo obſtinate in a thing as clear as the Sun; and you might as well conclude, that Chriſt is a Door made of Boards and Nails, becauſe the Scripture ſaith, he is a Door; and that he is a real Vine with green Leaves and Grapes about him, becauſe the Scripture ſaith he *is* a Vine. But ſuppoſe the word *is* in theſe words, *This* is *my Body*, muſt be underſtood literally, how doth this make for Tranſubſtantiation? Are the words *is*, and *is tranſubſtantiated*, all one? A thing may be ſaid to *be* a thouſand ways, and yet without Tranſubſtantiation; ſo that, if by the word *is* you underſtand Tranſubſtantiation, you your ſelves muſt go from the literal ſenſe, and aſ-

ſume a ſenſe, which is not expreſſed in that ſaying. All the Jews are ſo well verſed in the ſenſe of Sacramental Expreſſions, that by the word *is* they underſtand nothing, but *ſignifies* or *repreſents*; and therefore it's a horrid ſhame, that Chriſtians, meerly for fear of being laughed at, for departing from an abſurd opinion, and loſing the credit of a pretended Infallibility, ſhould make themſelves ignorant in that, which the meaneſt Jew, even before the Goſpel, underſtood without a Teacher; for we may confidently believe, that no Jew, before Chriſt's time, was ſo ſottiſh to think, when it's ſaid, *the fleſh is the Paſſover*, *Exod.* 12. 11. that the Fleſh or Blood was really the Paſſover, but only a ſign and repreſentation of it, or a token to them, as *Moſes* calls it, *ver.* 13. I will not here put you in mind of the ſtrange Abſurdities that muſt follow from this Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation, *viz.* that Chriſt, when he did eat and drink in this Sacrament, muſt have eaten his own Fleſh, and that the Apoſtles muſt have eaten his Body, while he was at the Table with them, and before it was crucified, *&c.* I could tell you, that

that this Doctrine is againſt the great Article of our Faith, that Chriſt is aſcended into Heaven, and there ſitteth at the Right hand of God until the day of Judgment.

That it is againſt the Nature of a real Body to be in a thouſand places at once. And that from hence it muſt follow, that the Body and Blood of Chriſt is capable of being devoured by Vermin, capable of being poiſoned, and inſtead of giving life may be ſo order'd, that it ſhall kill and murther; witneſs *Victor* the third, Pope of *Rome*, and *Henry* the VIIth. Emperour, who were poiſoned in the Sacrament, not to mention a thouſand more of ſuch Monſtrous conſequences: But ſince, Madam, you do inſiſt ſo much upon that place of Scripture, *John 6. 53. Except you eat my fleſh and drink my blood you have no life in you.* I'le but briefly ſhew you, how ill a Logician you are, to conclude that this is ſpoke of the Sacrament, or to conclude that theſe words infer a Corporal manducation of Chriſt's real Body and Blood: if they be meant of the Euchariſt, it will neceſſarily follow, that Chriſt oblig'd the Jews, and his hearers to come

to the Sacrament at the time he ſpake theſe words, for he ſpeaks of their preſent eating and drinking, (*Except ye eat, &c.*) But this he could not poſſibly do, for the Sacrament of his Body and Blood was not inſtituted till at leaſt a whole twelve months after, nor did any of his diſciples, at that time, dream of any ſuch thing, as his dying and being crucified, nor doth Chriſt ſpeak the leaſt word of it in the whole Chapter, which he muſt neceſſarily have done, if he had intended the Sacrament by it, which is all together founded in his Crucifixion. For this Sermon of Chriſt, concerning eating and drinking his fleſh and blood, was delivered juſt about the Feaſt of the Paſsover, *ver.* 4. After which feaſt, as it is ſaid, *John* 7. 1, 2. the Jews celebrated the feaſt of Tabernacles, and after this they kept another feaſt of the Paſſover, the laſt, which Chriſt was at, which was no leſs than a twelve month after, *John* 11. 55. *John* 12. 21. So that the Sacrament of Chriſt's Body and Blood, not being inſtituted before the laſt Paſſover, as all the Evangeliſts agree, it was not poſſible, that either the believing Jews, or the Apoſtles could under-

underſtand it of the Sacrament (and I ſuppoſe Chriſt intended to be underſtood) becauſe there was no ſuch thing as yet inſtituted. Beſides, it is impoſſible, that it can be underſtood of the Sacramental eating and drinking of the Body and Blood of Chriſt, for without this eating and drinking there is no Salvation to be had, as it is ſaid, *Joh.* 6. 53, 54. and if it were to be underſtood of the Euchariſt, we muſt exclude all Chriſtians from Salvation, that are not in a capacity, nor in a poſſibility of receiving it, which, I am ſure, your own Church will not do.

And that theſe words of Chriſt cannot poſſibly be underſtood of a Corporal eating Chriſt's fleſh, and drinking, his Blood, but muſt be underſtood of a Spiritual eating and drinking, that is, believing in him, and obeying him, and hoping for pardon through his Death, which is the ſpiritual Food of the Soul, is evident from the 54*th.* and 56*th.* Verſe, where every one that eats of his Fleſh, and drinks of his Blood, is ſaid to have actually eternal life in him, and Chriſt dwelling in him, and he dwelling in Chriſt. That is, Chriſt loves him with

a love of complacency, he is a Child of God, and beloved of him, and an Heir of Heaven; but ſince wicked men come to the Sacrament, not only in our Church, but even in the Church of *Rome*, it would follow, if a corporal eating were underſtood, that wicked men, eating Chriſt's Body, and drinking his Blood, have Eternal life in them, and that Chriſt dwells in them, and that they are true Children of God, and Heirs of Heaven, contrary to the unanimous Conſent of the Holy Prophets and Apoſtles, who call wicked men Children of the Devil, and blinded by the Devil, the God of the World, and Heirs of Damnation. And indeed it is ſtrange, that people ſhould contend for this corporal and ſenſual eating of Chriſt's Fleſh, and drinking his Blood, when Chriſt himſelf ſaith, *v.* 63. That the fleſh profiteth nothing, and that this eating and drinking muſt be underſtood ſpiritually, *i. e.* of Spiritual eating and drinking, which is believing, as it is ſaid, *v.* 64.

You ſee, Madam, what it is not to make uſe of your own reaſon, but to enſlave it to the Faith of a Church, which loves to act in the Dark, and would have

have her Children *Colliers*, and believe what the Church believes, and know little more than the great Myſtery of an *Ave Maria*, or a Roſary.

Time was, when you were pleaſed to tell our Miniſters, that though you were gone over to the Church of *Rome*, yet you had Liberty not to pray to Saints, nor to fall down before Images, that was not thought neceſſary by the Church of *Rome*, which only recommends praying to Saints, and Veneration of Relicks and Images, as a thing uſeful, and which men have received much benefit by. And indeed I remember, I was told, you thought, that praying to Saints was a kind of Idolatry, and therefore were glad they would excuſe you from that Worſhip; but ſince, I hear, that you are grown as devout a Worſhipper of Saints, and peculiarly of the Virgin *Mary*, and do proſtrate your ſelf before them, as much as the moſt tractable Papiſt in the World. I confeſs, I did ſmell a Rat at firſt, when your Prieſts aſſured you, that Invocation of Saints was not a thing commanded but recommended as uſeful, and was then confident that before a year came

to an end, for all these soft Expressions and Dispensations with your Omission of this Worship, they would perswade you to that Worship, which then you thought unlawful: My Prophecy is come to pass, and the Pill, which seemed very bitter at first, is swallowed, and become sweeter than Honey, and look'd upon as an excellent Medicine. And this, I must needs say, is more than you could have in our Church. But this is our Comfort, that the more ingenuous Men of the Church of *Rome* confess, that this praying to Saints or Angels was not heard of, or used in the Christian Church, for the first Three hundred years after Christ: And if the Christian Church, for the first Three hundred years, did not think it useful at all, it is a strange Degeneration from their Principles, to press it now as useful; Certainly, if God had thought this Invocation so useful, as your Church pretends it is, He would not have so peremptorily commanded, *Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorifie me.* Psal. 50. 15. and it's probable, the Apostles, in prescribing so many useful things of far less concern,

cern, would not have left us in the dark as to the mighty uſefulneſs of this Invocation; eſpecially, when they had occaſion to mention the Spirits of men made perfect, and did ſo often converſe with Angels. The Angel, *Revel.* 22. 8, 9. thought it a very uſeleſs thing, and would not admit of ſo much as a Religious proſtration of the Evangeliſt before him, becauſe it look'd like Sacriledge, and robbing God of his due.

But ſince your Church in this Adoration takes Pattern ſo much by the Courts of Princes, give me leave to ſuggeſt to you, how you think, a Soveraign Prince would take it, if a Subject ſhould give any of his Servants the the Title of Majeſty, or any other Title, which properly belongs to him. There are few Titles, that God hath, and inſpired Men have given to him, but you give them to the Bleſſed Virgin, and though, when you are charg'd with it, you fall to Diſtinctions, and turn, and wind your ſelves to get out, yet that ſhews only a bad cauſe, becauſe it requires ſo much artifice and cunning to defend it: But, alas! it muſt be Children, that are perſwaded and coaxed to believe,

believe, that the Church of *Rome* only counts it uſeful not neceſſary, when it is well known, that the generality of that Communion pray to Saints more than to God (which in the Scripture phraſe is honouring the Creature more than the Creator) and they never leave that Perſon, that goes over to them, till they have brought him to that Worſhip of Saints and Angels.

Its pretty to hear theſe Men talk, that it is only recommended as uſeful, when the Biſhops and Preachers of that Church are injoyned, and take their Oath upon't, to commend this Invocation to the People, as profitable; and the People are obliged to hearken to their Prieſts in all things; ſo that though a Man at firſt may think this Invocation not neceſſary, upon the account of its being only uſeful, yet from that other Obligation he hath to obey the Prieſt in all ſpiritual things, it becomes neceſſary: But from this ſcruple we are delivered, Madam, by the Confeſſion of Faith, which the Roman Catechiſm doth preſcribe, for there it is, that it is not only uſeful, but that we ought to pray unto Saints, and indeed ſhould any

Man

Man live in that Communion, and omit it, he would ſoon be looked upon as prophane, and but a half Convert to their Church; they would ſoon let him know their Diſpleaſure, and either fright or flatter him into Conformity. And is this the Worſhip, Madam, which Chriſt and his Apoſtles have injoyned the World? Are not you afraid of doing things, that do ſo nearly border upon robbing God of his honour and glory? Idolatry is a frightful word, and you do not love to hear it, and therefore I will trouble you with it as little as I can. But when God hath commanded you to come to him directly, without mentioning the Interceſſion of Saints and Angels, how dares your Church of her own head, bring in a Worſhip ſo dangerous? who ſhould preſcribe the way how God is to be worſhipped, but God himſelf? And if God requires you to addreſs your ſelf to him without any other Mediator, but Chriſt Jeſus, Have not you juſt reaſon to be afraid, that God will reject your Prayers, which are addreſſed to Saints, as Mediators, contrary to his order and injunction? What Kings ſuffer here

here on Earth, in letting their Subjects addreſs themſelves by their Servants to them, can be no example here, for God, as he intends not to regulate his Court by the Court of Princes, ſo we know it is againſt his Order, to go to his Servants, when we are commanded to come directly to him, and it is ſuch a voluntary humility as deprives us of our Reward, as the Apoſtles expreſly tells us, *Coloſſ.* 2. 18. God knew well enough if men addreſſed themſelves to his Servants, to have acceſs to him, ſomething of the Worſhip due to him would ſtick by the way, and reſt upon his Servants to his Diſhonour and Diſparagement, and therefore he mentioned nothing of this mediate Addreſs. Its true, we deſire our Neighbours here on Earth to pray for us, but for that we have a Command; for the Invocation of Saints departed we have none, and in vain do they worſhip me (ſaith God) teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of men, *Mat.* 15. 9. But beſides, when you deſire your living Neighbours to pray for you, I hope you do not fall down upon your knees to them, nor uſe the ſame Zeal and Devotion to them,

them, as you do to God, and for whole hours together, as you do to Saints departed. But why will you blind your ſelf in a thing which your own Practice contradicts you in, you know you do not only pray to Saints departed to pray for you, but you do many times, without making any mention of their Prayers for you, beg of them, with the ſame reverence, and proſtrations you uſe to God, to deliver you from all evil, and conſequently you beg the ſame Bleſſings of them you beg of God. And it is but a weak excuſe to ſay, that you intend by thoſe Prayers nothing elſe, but that by their Interceſſion they may get thoſe Bleſſings for you, for you go contrary to the nature of things, and whereas words ordinarily are Interpreters of the mind, you make your minds Interpreters of your Words and Actions, which is a ſtrange evaſion, and if ſuch a thing be intended, why do you lay a ſnare before the Common ſort of People? who, being ordered to pray to Saints for ſuch and ſuch Bleſſings, know nothing to the contrary, but that they are able to diſpence thoſe Bleſſings to them, and thus commit Idolatry by your willful connivance,

whoſe

whoſe Blood will certainly be required at your Church-mens hands one day. Examine but your Prayers to the Virgin *Mary* in your own Manuels, when you have prayed to her, and begged of her all that you can pray of God for, you add a word or two of her Interceſſion, which in good truth is nothing but a blind, that you may not be ſaid to commit down right Idolatry. You know thoſe Prayers to the Virgin *Mary*, which in the Latine, and I think in the Engliſh Manual too, are ordered to be ſaid to the Virgin, Morning and Evening. The one,

O my Lady, Holy Mary, *I commend my ſelf, my Soul and Body to thy bleſſed Care and ſingular Cuſtody, and to the boſome of thy mercy this day, and every day, and in the hour of my going out of the World. All my hope, and all my comfort, all my afflictions and miſeries, my life, my end I commit unto thee* (ſpeak ſeriouſly what can you ſay more to God) *that by thy moſt Holy Interceſſion, and by thy merits, all my Words and Actions may be directed and diſpoſed according to thine, and thy Sons Will,* Amen.

Where

Where it's worth noting, that firſt you do put as much truſt in the Virgin as you do in God; and then afterwards, to make theſe harſh Expreſſions ſofter, you deſire her to interceed for you, that your Works may be directed according to Chriſt's Will, nay and her own, as if ſhe were a Lawgiver too? Then follows, *Maria Mater Gratiæ*, &c. *O* Mary, *Mother of Grace, Mother of Mercy, protect us from the Enemy, and receive us in the hour of Death*; which St. *Stephen* thought was fitter to be ſaid to Chriſt when he cried, *Lord Jeſu receive my Spirit*. Then follows the Evening Prayer to the Virgin *Mary*; O Mary, *Mother of God, and gracious Virgin, the true Comforter of all diſtreſſed Creatures that call upon thee* (this Epithete by the way the Scripture gives to the Holy Ghoſt) *by that great Joy whereby thou waſt comforted, when thou didſt know that Jeſus Chriſt was riſen the third day from the Dead impaſſible, be thou the Comforter of my Soul; and by the ſame, who is thine and God's only Son, in the laſt day, when with Body and Soul I ſhall riſe again, and give an account of all my Actions, do thou vouchſafe to help me, that I may eſcape the Sentence of perpetual Damnation,*

nation by thee Pious Mother and Virgin, and may come happily with all the Elect of God to Eternal Joys, Amen. Then follows, *Under thy Protection we flee, Holy Mother of God, despise not our Prayer in our Necessities, but deliver us from all dangers always, O glorious and blessed Virgin.* Not to mention any more Prayers of this nature, whereof there is a vast number.

If God be a God jealous of his Glory, how can he like and approve of such doings? It's true, the Honour done to his Servants is done to him; but then it must be such Honour, as they are capable to receive; so to honour them, as to give them the Epithetes and Titles which the Scripture gives to none but God; so to honour them, as to use in your Prayers to them the same outward Prostrations, that you use to God, when you pray to him; so to honour them, as to spend more time in your Addresses to them than you do in Supplications to God, as is evident from your Rosary; so to honour them, as to say more Prayers to them than to Christ; so to honour them, as to joyn their Merits with Christ's Merits: This is an Honour

which,

which, I believe, will oblige God to ſay one day, *Who hath required theſe things at your hands?* And how unlike the Worſhip of the true God is that Veneration you expreſs to the Images and Pictures of Saints, and to the Relicts? How unlike that plain and ſimple Worſhip which the Goſpel enjoyns? One would think it ſhould a little ſtartle you to ſee, that your Church is afraid to let the Second Commandment be known to the People; you know they leave it out in their Primers and Catechiſms; or if they mention it, they do ſo mince it, that one ſees plainly they are afraid the People ſhould ſee the contrariety of their Worſhip to the expreſs Word of God. In the beginning of the Reformation, the very ſight of this Commandment made People run away from the Church of *Rome* as much as any thing: Indeed to conſider the general terms God uſes there, *Thou ſhalt not make to thy ſelf any graven Image*, &c. Thou ſhalt not only not *Worſhip them*, but *not ſo much as fall down before them*; would make a Perſon, that is not taken more with the Golden Legends than with Scripture, afraid of Proſtrations be-

fore Images, upon the account of Devotion: It is not all your plea, that you do not terminate your Worſhip on the Image, but on the Perſon repreſented by the Image, that will excuſe you at the great tribunal; for not to mention, that in the ſame manner the Heathen uſed to defend their groſſeſt Idolatry, and that you are forced to borrow their very Arguments; your own Authors do confeſs, that the common People are apt to pay Adoration, and do pay Adoration to the Images themſelves, and why will you lay ſuch a Stumbling-block before the People?

Much might be ſaid of the Adoration you pay to the conſecrated Hoſt: You confeſs, that the Worſhip you give to it, is the ſame Worſhip you give to God: What if that Wafer ſhould not be turned into the Body and Blood of Chriſt? What if it ſhould remain as very a Wafer, as it was before Conſecration? What if it ſhould not be God, as you have all the Demonſtration that Senſe or Reaſon can give you, that it is not changed into another Subſtance? What monſtrous Idolatry would this be? Ay, but we believe it to be God: Why, Madam,

doth

doth your Belief that ſuch a thing is God, or Chriſt, excuſe you from Idolatry? Should you believe a Stone to be God, and adore it, might not you juſtly be charged with Idolatry? You look upon the Heathens as Idolaters, becauſe they adore the Sun: Ay, but they believe that Sun to be God; and how then, according to your plea, can they be Idolaters? If there be ſuch a Tranſubſtantiation in the Sacrament, as you fancy, and an Adoration of the Hoſte ſo very neceſſary, what's the reaſon the Apoſtles of our Lord, that ſaw Chriſt before their eyes, (only could not believe that there were two Chriſts, one ſitting at the Table, the other reached out to them:) What's the reaſon, I ſay, that they ſate ſtill, and paid no Adoration to the Bread, which according to you was tranſubſtantiated into Chriſt? If they did not adore it, what a Preſumption is it in you to give the higheſt Worſhip to the conſecrated Bread upon a pretence that that Bread is God, under the accidents of Bread? But of this I have ſaid enough before, and could you but find time to read what our Authors have written upon this Subject, it could be nothing

but hardneſs of Heart, and Reſolution to be blind, could keep you in a Church, that fills your Head with Doctrines contrary to the nature of a Sacrament, contrary to all that *Moſes*, and the *Prophets*, nay, and all ſound *Philoſophers* have ſaid.

I will not ſay any thing here of your ſtrange unbloody Sacrifice of the Maſs, a thing unheard of in the purer Ages of Chriſtianity, and which the Scripture is ſo great a ſtranger to, that one would wonder how Mankind came to light upon the notion. Nor of your Doctrine of Merits, becauſe I find your Prieſts have two ſtrings to their bow, and tell the People one thing, and their Adverſaries, when they diſpute with them, another; affirm and deny it as they ſee occaſion, and neceſſity requires. Only one thing I muſt needs take notice of before I take my leave, and that is the Gigantick Argument, that ſome of your Gentlemen boaſt of, and which ſtrikes all Proteſtants dead at the firſt hearing of it. If there be any thing true, this muſt be true, that there is a God; if there be a God, there muſt be a true Religion; if there be a true Religion, there muſt

muſt be a true revealed Religion; if there be a true revealed Religion, the Chriſtian Religion muſt be that true revealed Religion; and if the Chriſtian Religion be true, then the Religion of the Church of *Rome* muſt be true; for the Argument that proves the Chriſtian Religion to be true, proves the Religion of the Church of *Rome* to be true, which is this, Either the Chriſtian Religion was propagated without Miracles, or by Miracles; if by Miracles, then it muſt be Divine; if without Miracles, then it is the greateſt Miracle, that a Religion, ſo contrary to Fleſh and Blood, ſhould prevail with ſenſual Men. The ſame, ſay they, is true of the Religion of the Church of *Rome*. For if it be propagated by Miracles, it muſt be Divine; if without Miracles, it muſt be ſo much more, becauſe it preſcribes things contrary to Fleſh and Blood, as Penances, Auſterities, *&c.* and thouſands of People do embrace it: It will not make my ſelf merry here in a thing ſo ſerious, elſe I could have told you, that I have heard of an Argument, when I was at School, ſomewhat like this; *He that drinks well, ſleeps well; he that ſleeps well, commits no*

Sin; *he that commits no Sin, will be ſaved:* therefore he that drinks well will be ſaved. But I forbear; And as to the aforeſaid Argument, whereby one of your Prieſts, that hath printed it, thinks to end all Controverſies, I will ſay no more but this. Firſt, that as there is no Chriſtian but muſt readily confeſs, that the Miracles Chriſt and his Apoſtles wrought, were a Confirmation of the Divinity of their Doctrine; ſo there is no Man of any brains can admit of the other part of the *dilemma* as univerſally true, that a Religion that goes againſt Fleſh and Blood, if propagated without Miracles, muſt therefore be neceſſarily Divine. Secondly, that ſo far as the Religion of the Church of *Rome* agrees with the truly Chriſtian Religion, ſo far it is undoubtedly true; and it will naturally follow, that if the Chriſtian Religion be true, the Religion of the Church of *Rome*, ſo far as it agrees with the Chriſtian Religion, muſt needs be true. And the ſame may be ſaid of the Proteſtant Religion; but that the Roman Religion muſt therefore be true, where it goes away, and differs from the truly Chriſtian Religion, revealed to us in the Goſpel,

Goſpel, is a conſequence which none but Children can approve of. Thirdly, with this Argument a Man might prove the Divinity of almoſt any Religion in the World. He that is no ſtranger to Hiſtory, muſt needs know what Severities, what Auſterities of Life the *Brachmans*, or the Heathen *Friers* in the *Indies*, do both preſcribe and practice, and what Proſelites they make, and how full the Kingdom of the great *Mogul* is of them; how ſome wallow in Aſhes day and night, how others go charged with heavy Iron Chaines all their days; how others ſtand upright upon their Leggs for whole Weeks together, *&c.* How in *Japan*, and other places of the *Indies*, the Prieſts perſwade the People to faſt themſelves to death, to go long Pilgrimages, to give all they have to the Prieſts, to throw themſelves down from ſteep Rocks, and break their Necks, and all to arrive the ſooner to the Happineſs of another World, *&c.* I think there cannot be things more contrary to Fleſh and Blood, than theſe, and yet we ſee theſe Doctrines are propagated daily without any force of Arms, only by Example and Perſwaſion, to be ſure without any Miracle; but, I hope,

that doth not prove their Religion to be Divine. It's a dictate of the light of Nature, that the way to Heaven is ſtraight, and therefore People that are religiouſly inclined, are eaſily won over to thoſe Men, whom they ſee exerciſe ſuch Severities upon themſelves.

To conclude, Madam, when all is done, what the true Church is, muſt be tried by the Writings of the Evangeliſts and Apoſtles. We ſee, that even in the Apoſtles days, Corruptions crept into the Church, witneſs the Churches of *Corinth*, *Galatia*, and *Coloſſe*, &c. and the Simplicity of the Goſpel began even then to be perverted, and mingled with idle and fooliſh Opinions and Practices; and therefore we muſt needs think, that after the Apoſtles deceaſe, the Church of Chriſt was ſubject to the ſame fate; ſo that if there be any Standard or Touchſtone left, whereby the Truth and Sincerity of a Church can be tried, (and we muſt needs think ſo well of God's Providence that he would not leave his Church without ſome Rule to rectifie their Errors by, in caſe ſhe ſhould be infected with any) it muſt be the Primitive Inſtitution of the Chriſtian Religion; and that Church, as I ſaid before,

fore, which teaches things that approach neareſt to that Primitive Inſtitution, muſt be the true Church.

And, Madam, do but once more for your Souls ſake, and for your Salvations ſake, compare the Doctrines and Practices of the Church of *Rome*, with the Doctrines and Practices of the Goſpel, the Fountain of Chriſtianity, and try whether you can find there the Doctrines of *Communion under one kind*, of *publick Prayers in a Tongue unknown to the People*, of *Purgatory*, of *the Maſs*, of *Tranſubſtantiation*, of *the Church of* Rome's *Supremacy and Infallibility*, of *Worſhipping and Adoring the Virgin* Mary, *and Praying to Saints*, of *Veneration of Relicks and Images*, of *Adoration of the Hoſte*, &c. Do not force any places of Scripture, and try whether you can make ſenſe of any of theſe Doctrines by Scripture: View the ſtream of the Goſpel, and ſearch whether there be any thing like theſe Doctrines in it: Why will you make your Reaſon a Slave to your Prieſts magiſterial Sentences? How can you anſwer it to God, that you did not improve your Reaſon more? What have you your Reaſon for, but to judge what is agreeable to the

Word

Word of God, and what is not? Is not this acting like a Creature void of Reason, to be guided altogether by what a few blind Guides say to you, without enquiring at *the Law and Testimony*, whether things are so as they say or no? Wonderful Stupidity! I stand amazed at it. It is not all the seeming Holiness of those Priests you converse withal, that make the Church you are in, a true Church. There is no Sect in the World, but when they are under a Cloud, Necessity, and the Discouragement they are under, and their desire to make Proselites, makes them outwardly Religious. There may be, and no doubt are zealous and outwardly pious Men in all Religions in the World; but that doth not make every Religion true and divine. An outward shew of Piety is the only way of propagating any Religion. The Devil himself could not propagate Heathenism and Idolatry, but by the pretended Zeal, and Piety, and Abstinence, and Mortification of *Apollonius Tyaneus*; who yet by the confession of the whole Christian World, was no better than a Wizard and Conjurer. I make no application to any particular Priest in the

Church,

Church of *Rome:* I do not deny but Men may be in great Errors, and be very zealous for their Errors, and ſeemingly very pious in their Zeal; and when their Errors are not very willful, and deſtroy not the true Worſhip of God, for ought I know, they may find Mercy in the day of our Lord. I grant there is a great ſhew of outward Piety in the Church of *Rome*, very dazling and very moving; but the great danger lies here, that the Worſhip they give to God with one hand, they ſtrike and pull down with the other: I know too well the practice of their Churches; and a Heathen, that ſhould come into their Temples beyond Sea, would verily believe that they worſhip a Multiplicity of Gods as well as he, whatever their Pretenſions may be to the contrary: It is not what People ſay, ſo much as what they do, that God takes notice of; and though you ſhould Ten thouſand times proteſt, that you worſhip and adore God alone, yet while God ſees you adore the Virgin *Mary*, with as great Zeal and Reverence as you do him, pray to her oftner than you do to him, make as many bows to her, and other Saints, as you do to him, and other things of that nature,

nature, how can he believe you? Religion is a thing that will not bear Jeſts and Hypocriſie; God will not be put off with Contradictions between Speeches and Practices.

Madam, I do from my Heart pitty you, and as it might be the weakneſs of your Judgment, that might lead you into this Erroneous Church, ſo I beſeech you, for Chriſt's ſake, to return to the Church you have raſhly left, where you cannot run a hazard if you will but follow the plain Doctrines of the Goſpel, beſides which we preach nothing, and enjoin nothing as neceſſary to Salvation. Should theſe Intreaties and Beſeechings be alledged againſt you in the laſt day, as things which you have, contrary to Reaſon, refuſed and ſlighted, how dreadful would your Condition be? I have diſcharged my Duty, and given you warning; I would not have your Guilt lie at my Door, and therefore have let you know my real Thoughts and Sentiments concerning your Condition, and the Church you are in. The Great God of Heaven open your Eyes, that you may ſee and fear.

Time was when you would have believed

lieved us as much as you do now the Prieſts of the Church of *Rome*. It's ſtrange, that now they ſhould ſpeak nothing but Truths, and we nothing but Falſhood. Do you think we do not underſtand the Scriptures, and Fathers, and Antiquity, as well as they? And can we all be ſo beſotted with Intereſt and Paſſion that none of us ſhould yield to the dictates of their Church, if we could prevail with our Senſe and Reaſon to believe, that the things wherein they differ from us were agreeable to the Goſpel? Sure we have a great many Men among us that are great Lovers of Peace, and would be glad that the whole Chriſtian World were agreed; and would theſe Men ſtand out againſt that Union, if it could be done with a ſafe Conſcience? Certainly we haveMen as learned among us, as ever the Sun did ſhine upon; nay the Church of *Rome* hath at this day few Men to equal ours for Learning and Knowledge. And would all our Learned Men be ſo ſtubborn and obſtinate, as not to agree with the Church of *Rome*, if they did not ſee plainly, that *there is Death in that Pot*; and that the Errors in that Church cannot be ſubſcribed to without

without hazarding the Welfare of their Souls? I will but uſe your own Argument, when you went over to the Church of *Rome*, and were perſwaded by the Earneſtneſs of her Prieſts to yield to their Reaſonings, what pleaſure can we take in promoting your Damnation? What can be our Intereſt in deceiving you? You uſed that Argument on their ſide, why will you not uſe it on our ſide; Judge you, whither we, that have the Goſpel on our ſide for what we teach, are not in a ſafer way, than that Church, which for all the new Doctrines they have added to the Old Creeds, are forced to run to the broken Ciſterns of Tradition; and I know not what Fathers, whoſe Writings they know not whether they be genuine or no? As you are now, you live in wilful oppoſition to the Doctrine and Precepts of the Goſpel; and O remember what St. *Paul* doth ſay, 2 *Theſſ.* 1. 7, 8. *That the Lord Jeſus will ere long come down from Heaven with all his Holy Angels to take Vengeance on thoſe who have diſobeyed the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Once more therefore I charge you before Almighty God, and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to repent of your Errors,

Errors, and to return to the boſom of that Church, in which you received your Life and Being, and the Principles of Religion and Chriſtianity. But if all this ſeem to you no more but Bugbears, I have delivered my own Soul, and ſhould be ſorry that this Diſcourſe ſhould ſtand as a Witneſs againſt you in the Laſt day, which God knows was only intended as a Motive to draw you back to that Fold from which you have wandred and gone aſtray. I am,

Madam,

Your Faithful Friend to ſerve you,

Feb. 17. 1677. A. H.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

Madam,

AS in the publiſhing of this Letter I had no other deſign, but to prevent the fall of others into the like dangers, ſo I have particularly inſiſted on thoſe motives, which have of late tempted ſome perſons to go over to the Roman Church, and though I have repreſented theſe motives as yours, yet in this I have been ſo far from doing any thing againſt the Laws of private Diſcourſe, or Friendſhip, or Acquaintance, that I have only touch'd upon the common ſtumbling-blocks, which make unwary people joyn themſelves to that Church; Blocks, which might eaſily be removed, if Men or Women would but give themſelves leave to think, and would prefer the ſolid Dictates of their reaſon before the Suggeſtions of their ſoft, and ſickly Paſſions. One thing I had almoſt forgot, and which indeed is the great Bug-bear, whereby your Church-men fright their people from running over

to

to us, and that is, that our Church began but about an hundred and fifty years ago, that *Luther* and *Zwinglius* were the Authors of it, and that we had no Church before; pittiful ſhifts indeed to keep people from ſeeing the Sun at Noon. Suppoſe our Religion did but begin then, why, muſt people be always in an Error? Muſt they never reform when they have done amiſs? if there were monſtrous Errors in the Church of *Rome*, which the aforeſaid Perſons ſaw would be the Death of Chriſtianity, and which they could not ſubſcribe to without debauching their Reaſon, or wronging both their own and other Mens Conſciences, was it not rational, they ſhould proteſt againſt ſuch things, to give their fellow Chriſtians warning? When the Houſe is on fire, would you have no body awake to alarm the Neighbours to look to themſelves? did they ſee ſo many thouſand Men ready to be drown'd, and would you have had them hold their Tongues, and barbarouſly ſuffered them all to be drown'd? Did they ſee the Chriſtian Religion like to be ſwallow'd up by Darkneſs and Ignorance, and was it not time to rouze the ſlum-

bering World? But however, that theſe Men were the firſt broachers of our Religion, is notoriouſly falſe: Firſt, becauſe long before them, there were Men that lived in the external Communion of the Church of *Rome*, but diſlik'd the Errors, as they crept in, and grew dangerous, and though they were over-aw'd and ſilenc'd many times by the higher Powers of the Roman Court, yet they both deteſted thoſe Corruptions, and as they had opportunity, proteſted againſt them, as were an eaſie matter to prove from age to age, if it had not been done already over and over by Divines of our Church, ſo that though theſe Men, that lived long before *Luther*, and whom God ſtill rais'd to vindicate his Truth, as it grew more and more polluted, were not call'd Proteſtants by the People, yet in effect they were ſo, and conſequently there were Proteſtants many years before *Luther* and *Zwinglius*: And though they were not ſuffered by the Ignorant, and imperious Eccleſiaſtical Powers, to meet and aſſemble themſelves in publick, yet they made a Church, as much as the followers of Holy *Athanaſius* did, when the whole World

World was turned *Arian*; as much as *Elijah*, and thoſe ſeven thouſand, the Oracle mentioned, made a Church, when the whole Country was over-run with Idolaters. Theſe ſeven thouſand we read lay hid, and durſt not appear in publick, being oppreſs'd by the Idolatrous powers, that ſat at the Stern, and thought there was no good fiſhing but in troubled waters. And indeed in this manner our Church was diſpers'd long before *Luther*, among the greater multitude of the followers of the corrupted Roman Church, as a handful of wheat lies ſcatter'd in a buſhel of Chaff, and though it it did not appear in Pomp and Grandeur, yet that external Splendour is not eſſential to the truth of a Church, your own men may be convinced by the aforementioned examples.

Secondly, if your Champions ſpeak ſtrictly of the Religion, which we profeſs in the Church of *England*, they are under a miſtake, when they make *Luther* or *Zwinglius* the Authors of it, for our Reformation began ſome time after, and was both begun, and carried on with great deliberation and conſideration under *Edward* the 6th. by publick Au-

thority, whoſe proper province it is to take notice of what is amiſs in a Kingdom or Commonwealth, whether it be in Church or State, and to reform and mend it. It's no great matter, when a Reformation begins, ſo the Reformation be but juſt; and if ſuch a Reformation had begun but yeſterday, that would not have made it unlawful, and that our Reformation was juſt and neceſſary hath been prov'd by our Divines beyond all reaſonable contradiction, and how could it but be juſt, when the Decrees of the Church of *Rome* controll'd the Word of the Living God, and vyed with the Oracles of the Goſpel. How and when the ſeveral Errors crept into that Church, is not material to determine, it's enough we found them there, and it was God's mercy not to give all the learned Men of that age over to believe a lye. But it's pretty to hear your Church-men talk of the novelty of our Religion, when it is evident to all the underſtanding World, that our firſt Reformers began no new Religion, but deſired only to keep to the Old. All their endeavour was to keep to the Religion of the Bible, and to cut off all ſuperfluities, and things prejudicial

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to Salvation, and was there any hurt in that? They ſaw, that many things then in uſe in the Church of *Rome* were diametically oppoſite to the Doctrines and practiſes of the Primitive Church, and they juſtly thought it their Duty to reduce the Church to the antient Pattern; the prouder Clergy of the Roman Church would not yield to it, but would have all their new fangles, and all their additions to the antient Symbols received as Articles of Faith, though all periſh'd, and the coat of Chriſt were rent into a thouſand pieces; the more humble, and more moderate of the Clergy, ſaw the pride and inſolence of the other, and trembled, and thus we and they parted; we kept to the old Religion, and your Men choſe the new, and much good it may do you with it; and pray Judge by this, which is the Schiſmatick Church, we or they? we that would have healed *Iſrael*, or they that would not be healed; ſo that it is not our Religion that began ſo lately as 150 years ago, about *Luthers* time, but it's yours that commenced then; for you then embraced the new additions to the antient Catholick Creeds with greater greedineſs, and were reſolv'd to maintain that by Bravado's, which you were not

able to defend with Arguments. It's a very ordinary thing for people, who once incline to the Communion of the Roman Church to demand of us, before they go over, whither a perſon may be ſaved in that Church. The Charity and moderation our Divines uſually expreſs in their anſwer to this Query, I am ſenſible hath done our Church ſome harm whereas the Roman Prieſts, being bold in their uncharitableneſs, and damning all that are out of their Communion, make ſome weak people believe, that they muſt be in the right, becauſe they are more daring in their Aſſeverations. We have far greater reaſon to be peremptory in excluding the Members of the Church of *Rome* from Salvation, than they have to exclude us, for if that Church be guilty of Idolatry (as I ſee, your Divines find it a very hard task to anſwer the Arguments of our learned Men, that prove it.) Thoſe that are guilty of this Crime may ſoon be reſolved by the Apoſtle what their lot is like to be in another World; for *No Idolater*, ſaith St. *Paul*, meaning one that lives, and dies ſo, *ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6. 9. yet we are modeſt, and whatever the principles of that Church may lead Men

to,

to, we hope, there may be many in that Church, that either, while they live in the Communion of that Church, have an averſion from the dangerous, and Idolatrous practices of it, or ſometimes before they die do heartily repent of the abſurd, and unreaſonable Doctrines, and Worſhip, they have too long aſſerted, and complied with, and of ſuch we cannot but entertain a very favourable opinion, and indeed I could name you ſome very famous Men both in *France* and *Italy*, who, though they have continued in the Communion of that Church, *i. e.* have not joyn'd themſelves to any particular publick Proteſtant Church, yet have not approv'd of ſuch things in the Roman Church, as manifeſtly obſtructs Mens Salvation, and though like *Nicodemus* they have not dared openly to avow their diſlike of ſuch Errors, for fear of danger, yet in their hearts they have abhorr'd them, and declared ſo much to their Friends, and intimate Acquaintance. And though their ſeeming Communion with a Church ſo Erroneous, cannot be totally excuſed, becauſe it looks like a tacite approbation of her Errors, yet ſince we read of *Joſeph*, that he was a Diſciple of Chriſt ſecretly, and notwithſtanding his

not confeſſing Chriſt publickly, accepted of God, we hope ſuch Mens continuing in the external Communion of the Roman Church is not a willful Error, but rather a pardonable Infirmity, a timorouſneſs which hath nothing of malice in it, and therefore will not hinder them from Salvation. We know not what mercy God may ſhew to many poor people in that Church, who are invincibly Ignorant, and never ſaw a Bible, from whence they might rectifie their miſtakes, and do live honeſtly in this preſent World; but we muſt withal confeſs, that the Servant, who hath known his Maſters will, and hath not done it, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes, and whether thoſe that have been enlightened in our Church, and have taſted the good Word of God, and cannot but ſee our Agreement with the Goſpel, and after all this embrace the Errors of the Roman Church; whether theſe will be excuſable at the laſt day, we juſtly doubt of; to live in great Errors is to live in Sin, but where that living in Errors is joyn'd with reſiſtance of great light, and knowledge, there the Sin becomes all Crimſon, which was but of a faint red before; and if this be the Character of Chriſt's Friends

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to do whatſoever he commands us, then the inference is very eaſie, that thoſe cannot be Chriſt's Friends, nor reign with in Heaven, that willfully leave undone, what they know he hath commanded, and ſet up a new Worſhip, which he hath no where commanded: Madam, had you never ſeen ſuch a thing as the Scripture, your going over to that Church might have deſerved ſome Apology, but when you were ſurrounded with the beams of that light which ſhines in darkneſs, as St. *Peter* calls the Word, with all thoſe rayes about you, to ſhut your eyes, and deſperately to venture upon the Church, which enjoyns Men to live againſt ſome of Gods Laws, as againſt, *Exod.* 20. 5, 6. and *Matth.* 26. 27. &c. and conſequently obliges them to prepare for God's diſpleaſure; this, I confeſs, is an Action, which, as it ſavours of great willfulneſs, ſo I queſtion, if you die in't without ſerious repentance, whether the Joys you hope for, will ever fall to your ſhare. If your Church-men do mean honeſtly, and do truly aim at the Peace of Chriſtendom, and in good earneſt deſign the Union, of Men that profeſs the Name of Chriſt, why will not they part with thoſe Doctrines that are ſo great an

offence,

offence, not only to all Proteſtants, but to Jews and Mahometans too? If that worſhipping of Saints and Images be not neceſſary, but only uſeful, why will not they quit that Worſhip, which by their own pretences is needleſs, eſpecially when they might do ſo much good by it? If the Cup was formerly given to the Laity, why will not they to effect the aforeſaid Union, reſtore it to the Laity? If the ſubſtance of the Sacrament, and the comfort ariſing from it, may remain entire, without obliging Men to believe a Tranſubſtantiation, or Adoration of the conſecrated Wafer, why will not they for peace ſake lay aſide ſuch Doctrines, which neither themſelves, nor any Creature underſtands? If Heaven and Hell are ſufficient motives to a Holy Life, why will not they for quietneſs ſake renounce their Doctrine of Purgatory, which by their own confeſſion hath no ground in Scripture?

Madam, I have that charitable opinion of you, that if you had but taken a view of the Worſhip of the Church of *Rome*, as it is practic'd beyond Sea, in places where there is no fear of contradiction from any Hereticks, where they may freely and ſecurely act according to their prin-

Principles, had you ſeen the mode of worſhipping the Virgin *Mary* at *Rome*, or in *Spain*, or *Italy*, the ſight of it would have certainly diſcourag'd you from embracing that Religion, which now you ſeem to be mainly delighted with; for indeed the Religion of the Church of *Rome* at this time, if a Man were to gueſs from that, which hath the greateſt outward Veneration, is little elſe than a Worſhip of the Virgin *Mary*. The very Beggers beyond-Sea in begging of Alms, beg more for the Virgin *Mary*'s ſake, than for Chriſt's ſake. This, Madam, I know to be true, who am no ſtranger to Foreign parts; and I will aſſure you, that in thoſe Cities or Towns, where both Papiſts and Proteſtants have the free exerciſe of their Religion, you ſhall live Twenty years in a Town before you hear that any Proteſtant is turned Papiſt, (ſo few charms are there in the Exerciſe of their Religion beyond Sea) but you ſhall not be above a year or two in ſuch a Town, before you hear that ſeveral Papiſts are turned Proteſtants (ſuch a force hath truth;) The Religion of the Church of *Rome*, as it is practis'd in *England*, looks harmleſs. Now and then upon ſome great Feſtival they ſhew you a Picture of the Virgin *Mary*,

or

or of ſome other Saint, and the honeſt Prieſt qualifies every Doctrine, makes the Errors ſoft and plauſible, and they dare not, living in a Proteſtant Country, ſerve the Hoſt of Heaven, I mean Saints and Angels with all their Appertenances, as they do in places, where there are no Proteſtants to watch them.

Here their Religion ſeems to be without a ſting, and is clad in the fleece of Sheep; but if you could but make a Voyage into *Spain* or *Italy*, I doubt not but you would ſee the Venome of it, and avoid it: and the only way not to be of the Church of *Rome*, would be to go to *Rome*, provided you do not go without your Bible. In good truth, that Church hath turn'd Chriſtianity into a meer outward Pomp and Splendor, which raviſhes the eye, but can never content a Man's reaſon. The gliſtering Gold in their Temples, the curious Images of Saints and Angels, the numerous and ſtately Altars, the mighty Silver Statues, the rich and glorious Veſtments you ſee up and down in their Churches, ſtrike the Senſes into a kind of extaſie, and it muſt be Senſe only, for a conſiderate mind, that ſearches the inſide of things as well as the outſide, cannot be ſo eaſily gull'd and deceiv'd;

and

and this outward Pomp they make not the leaſt ſign of the truth of their Church, not remembring, that if this be a good ſign, the idolatrous People in *Japan* and *China*, whoſe Temples are infinitely more ſhining and glorious, will have a better Title to the true Church than they: I muſt confeſs, that in Policy, and Worldly Craft and Cunning, the Church of *Rome* exceeds ours, for they have not only turn'd the Spiritual Worſhip of the Goſpel into a Senſual Service, into outward Religious Formalities, a thing ſtrangely pleaſing to fleſh and blood; but they have Shooes that will fit all ſorts of Feet, great and ſmall, and have Remedies for all Diſtempers, and you may go to Heaven in that Church either through the ſtraight way, or through the broad, which you pleaſe; they can fit the Melancholy Perſon, and the Jovial; they have Monaſteries and Nunneries, and Severities to content the one, and know how to allow greater liberty to the other; they can either ſend a Man to Happineſs through a tedious task of Mortification, if he likes that method beſt, or help him thither by a quicker diſpatch, by Confeſſion, Attrition, and Abſolution upon a Death-bed, when the Man can hold Sin and the World

World no longer: Live, or die, you cannot do amiſs in that Church, for living you may be forgiven, and after Death you may be pray'd out of Purgatory, ſooner or later, according as you will ſpend Money upon Maſſes, for Gold doth ſtrangely quicken theſe Supplications.

Such a Church, Madam, you have eſpouſed; and divorced your ſelf from one that prefers the Wiſdom of God, and of the Goſpel, before the Wiſdom of the Fleſh, and glories in dealing plainly and honeſtly with all Men, that keeps cloſe to the Scriptures, and yet is not againſt thoſe pious Cuſtomes of Antiquity, which are not contradictory to the Scriptures, that generouſly maintains the Prerogative of God; and gives no other Honour to Saints and Angels, but what may conſiſt with the Glory of her Creator; that hath made no new Articles of Faith, but keeps to the old, and thinks it Rebellion againſt God to enjoin things as neceſſary to Salvation, which God never made ſo; that urges the ſtricteſt Life, and encourages nothing but what may promote true Piety and Devotion; that hath no more Ceremonies but what are decent, and labours to free Religion at once from Slovenlineſs and Superſtition; that ſecures the Right

of

of Soveraign Princes, and teaches her Children to live like good Subjects, and good Chriſtians; and though it be her misfortune, that too many of her pretended Members live like Enemies of Chriſtianity, yet that's not long of her Doctrines and Conſtitutions, but long of the Stubbornneſs of Men, who will not be reform'd by her Precepts: As no Man blames Chriſt or his Apoſtles, becauſe *Judas* was a Hypocrite, or becauſe *Simon Magus* profeſs'd their Religion; ſo they betray great Ignorance and Simplicity, that, for the monſtrous Impieties of many that profeſs themſelves Members of our Aſſemblies, deſpiſe and ſlight our Church, which in her Principles is moſt averſe from all ſuch practices; a Church, which as for mine own particular, I have deliberately and premeditately embraced and choſen, ſo, I hope, I ſhall never be ſo much forſaken of God, or of my Reaſon, as to quit it to become a Papiſt. I have not been altogether a careleſs Obſerver of the ſeveral Chriſtian Churches, diſpers'd through the World. Deſire of mine own Salvation hath made me take particular notice, what Corruption there is in them, and what Affinity they have with the Primitive Profeſſors of Chriſtianity: And

I muſt freely confeſs upon a ſerious Examination of the Scripture, and the Fathers of the three firſt Centuries after Chriſt, that from my Heart I think there is no Church this day in all the Chriſtian World, be it Eaſtern or Weſtern, that in her Principles and Conſtitutions bears ſo much of the Image of the truly Primitive Church, or comes ſo near it, as the Church of *England*; a Church, which as your Fore-fathers had courage to burn for, ſo I verily believe, that he underſtands not her Innocent Deſigns, and excellent Rules, that dares not die a Martyr in her cauſe.

Once more your Faithful

Friend to ſerve you,

A. Horneck.

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